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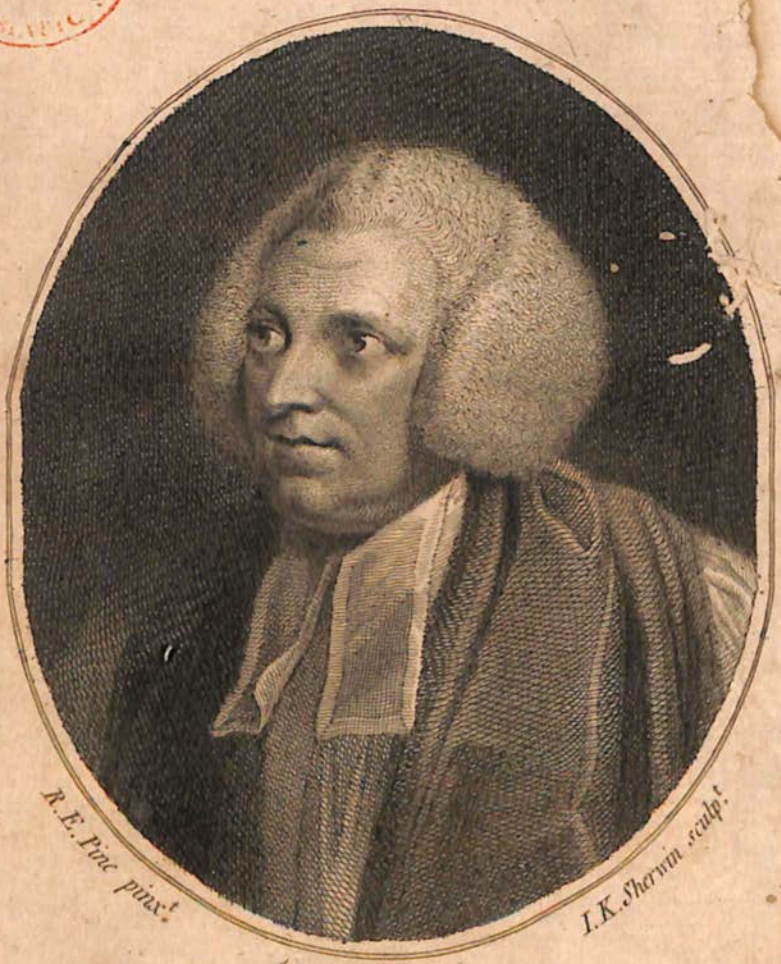

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Right Rev.d Robert Lowth
LORD BISHOP of S.t London

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LECTURES

ON THE

SACRED POETRY

OF THE

HEBREWS;

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN OF THE

RIGHT REV. ROBERT LOWTH, D.D.

LATE PRÆLECTOR OF POETRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, AND NOW LORD BISHOP OF LONDON,

BY G. GREGORY, F.A.S.

AUTHOR OF ESSAYS HISTORICAL AND MORAL.

66973

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

THE PRINCIPAL NOTES OF PROFESSOR MICHAELIS, AND NOTES BY THE TRANSLATOR AND OTHERS.

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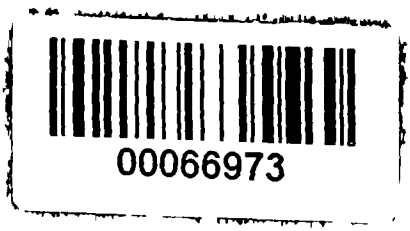

TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND

R I C H A R D,

LORD BISHOP OF LANDAFF;

WHOSE GREAT ABILITIES HE HAS ALWAYS ADMIRED,

WHOSE CANDOUR AND LIBERALITY

HE HAS REPEATEDLY EXPERIENCED;

THIS ATTEMPT TO RENDER MORE EXTENSIVELY USEFUL

AN INVALUABLE WORK,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS GRATEFUL SERVANT,

THE TRANSLATOR.

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THE TRANSLATOR's PREFACE.

IT may not be improper to apprize the public, that although the following Lectures be entitled Lectures on the Hebrew Poetry, their utility is by no means confined to that ſingle object. They embrace all THE GREAT PRINCIPLES OF GENERAL CRITICISM, as delivered by the ancients, improved by the keen judgment and poliſhed taſte of their author. In other words, this work will be found an excellent compendium of all the beſt rules of taſte, and of all the principles of compoſition, illuſtrated by the boldeſt and moſt exalted ſpecimens of genius (if no higher title be allowed them)

them) which antiquity has tranſmitted to us: and which have hitherto ſeldom fallen under the inſpection of rational criticiſm.

Leſt, from the title of the work, or from the circumſtance of being originally publiſhed in a learned language, a prejudice ſhould ariſe in the breaſt of any individual, that theſe Lectures are addreſſed only to the learned, I think it a duty to anticipate a miſapprehenſion which might interfere both with his entertainment and inſtruction. The greateſt as well as the moſt uſeful works of taſte and literature, are thoſe, which, with reſpect at leaſt to their general ſcope and deſign, lie moſt level to the common ſenſe of mankind. Though the learning and genius diſplayed in the following Lectures muſt ever excite our warmeſt admiration; though they abound in curious reſearches, and in refined and exquiſite

exquiſite obſervations; though the ſplendour of the ſentiments and the elegance of the ſtyle will neceſſarily captivate the eye and the ear of the claſſical reader; the truth is, THAT THEY ARE MORE CALCULATED FOR PERSONS OF TASTE AND GENERAL READING, THAN FOR WHAT IS COMMONLY TERMED THE LEARNED WORLD. Here are few nice philological diſquiſitions, no abſtruſe metaphyſical ſpeculations; our author has built ſolely upon the baſis of common ſenſe, and I know no part of his work, which will not be intelligible and uſeful to almoſt every underſtanding.

A ſtill greater miſtake it would be, to ſuppoſe any knowledge of the Hebrew neceſſary to enable us to read theſe Lectures with profit and pleaſure. So happily does the ſimple genius of the Hebrew language accord with our own;

and ſo excellent a tranſcript of the original (notwithſtanding a few errors) is our common tranſlation of the Scriptures; ſo completely, ſo minutely, I might ſay, does it repreſent the ſtyle and character of the Hebrew writings, that no perſon, who is converſant with it, can be at all at a loſs in applying all the criticiſms of our author. On this account I will venture to aſſert, that if the genius of the tranſlator approached in any degree the clearneſs, the elegance, the elevation of the author, theſe Lectures in our own language would exhibit the ſubject in a much fairer and more advantageous light, than in the original form. The Engliſh idiom, indeed, has ſo much greater analogy to the Hebrew, that the advantages, which it poſſeſſes over the Latin, muſt be obvious to any reader who compares the literal tranſlations in each of theſe languages.

But

But the utility of theſe Lectures, as a ſyſtem of criticiſm, is perhaps their ſmalleſt merit. They teach us not only taſte but virtue; not only to admire and revere the Scriptures, but to profit by their precepts. The author of the preſent work is not to be conſidered merely as a maſter of the general principles of criticiſm; he has penetrated the very ſanctuaries of Hebrew literature; he has inveſtigated with a degree of preciſion, which few critics have attained, the very nature and character of their compoſition: by accurately examining, and cautiouſly comparing every part of the Sacred writings; by a force of genius, which could enter into the very deſign of the authors; and by a comprehenſiveneſs of mind, which could embrace at a ſingle view a vaſt ſeries of correſponding paſſages, he has diſcovered the manner, the ſpirit, the idiom

of

of the original, and has laid down ſuch axioms as cannot fail greatly to facilitate our knowledge and underſtanding of the Scriptures. The work would amply repay the trouble of peruſing it, by the excellent elucidations of particular paſſages of Holy writ which it affords; but, when we reflect that theſe are connected with ſuch rules and principles as may be applied with the greateſt advantage to other difficult paſſages, with ſuch rules, indeed, as will enable us better to comprehend the whole, ſurely it muſt appear ineſtimable in the eye of any man, who has at all at heart his own improvement in religious knowledge. Perhaps the Sceptic may learn from the peruſal of theſe Lectures, that the difficulties of which he complains in the Scriptures, are difficulties which might in ſome meaſure be removed by a little more knowledge,

knowledge, and a little more diligence in the application of it. Perhaps, too, thoſe profound and learned critics, who quote and cenſure authors, whom they have never read, and talk fluently about languages, the rudiments of which they have yet to learn, may find, to their great aſtoniſhment, that a degree of penetration ſuperior to their own is able to diſcover at leaſt a few rays of ſublimity in the writings of the Hebrews.

Whatever be the merits or the defects of this Tranſlation, on one account at leaſt I will venture to promiſe myſelf the warmeſt commendations of my readers, namely, for having made them acquainted with the admirable criticiſms of the learned Michaelis. I have much reaſon to regret, that the nature of this publication would not permit the inſertion of all his obſervations, and at full length. But the truth is, however

ſuitable

ſuitable they may have been to the work in its original form, ſome of his remarks are too refined to be generally uſeful; and ſome of them too learned to be intelligible to any, but thoſe who are familiar with the whole circle of Oriental literature. I have therefore ſelected ſuch of them as I thought applicable to my preſent purpoſe; and, as it was my wiſh to confine this work within as narrow limits as my duty to the public would permit, and to ſuffer in it nothing, but what I eſteemed immediately uſeful, I have taken the liberty of abridging ſome, which I thought in a literal tranſlation might appear tedious to the Engliſh reader.

Some obſervations of my own I have alſo preſumed to introduce among the notes. They were ſuch as to me ſeemed calculated to render the work a more complete compendium of critical ſcience.

ence. As I do not, however, think myſelf above cenſure, ſo I truſt I ſhall not be found too obſtinate for correction. Should my indiſcretion, therefore, have obtruded any thing which a fair and liberal critic ſhall deem impertinent or improper, I ſhall with much cheerfulneſs, in a future edition, ſubmit to its eraſement.

It was not till I had conſulted ſome of the firſt literary characters concerning the propriety of ſubſtituting in the place of our author's inimitable Latin poems any Engliſh verſions, that I ventured to appear as a poetical tranſlator. Even then I did not fail to inſpect every modern author, who I imagined might furniſh me with compoſitions worthy of appearing among the criticiſms of Lowth. I have preferred Mr. Merrick's Pſalms to any verſion which I ſhould have been able to produce, (except, indeed,

deed, in a ſingle inſtance, where it was neceſſary that the meaſure ſhould be elegiac) not only on account of their intrinſic merit, but in conſequence of the commendation which our author has beſtowed upon them. By the kindneſs of Mr. Maſon alſo, this publication is enriched with one of the moſt beautiful Lyric productions in our language, I mean his paraphraſe of the xivth of Iſaiah. When I could find no tranſlation to anſwer my purpoſe, I was obliged to attempt the verſification of the paſſages myſelf. The public will therefore recollect, that I was a poet through neceſſity, not choice; and will, I flatter myſelf, receive this as a ſufficient apology for the indifferent performance of that part of my undertaking.

Preſuming that it would be more agreeable to give the literal tranſlations of the Hebrew from works of eſtabliſhed

reputation, I have taken many of them from our author's excellent verſion of Iſaiah, from Mr. Blaney's Jeremiah, from Biſhop Newcombe's Minor Prophets, Mr. Heath's Job, and from Dr. Hodgſon's tranſlation of the Canticles: and this I truſt will be accepted by thoſe Gentlemen as a general acknowledgment. Where theſe did not furniſh me with a tranſlation, I have endeavoured myſelf to produce one as faithful to the original as my knowledge of the language would admit.

Convinced on the whole of the utility of this publication, and yet aware of my own inability to do it juſtice, I diſmiſs it with that mixed emotion of confidence and humility, which ſuch a ſituation naturally inſpires. Imperfect as it appears before the world, if it be the means of imparting to but a few ſome of that information, which all who

read

read the original muſt regret was not more generally diffuſed, I am ſure I ſhall have deſerved well of the community: at the ſame time, the reader will do me great injuſtice, if he ſuppoſes that I have ſatisfied myſelf in the execution of my taſk. Whatever be its reception, it will diſappoint no expectations formed by me of profit or of fame; and if neither enſue from it, I ſhall have no juſt cauſe of complaint. It was impoſſible to read theſe Lectures with the attention which even this tranſlation required, and not derive advantages from them far ſuperior to the labour they have coſt me; and whatever may be their effect with others, I am confident they have left me ſomething wiſer, and I truſt ſomething better, than they found me.

In the proſecution of this work I have incurred a debt of gratitude, which if

if I cannot diſcharge, it is but fair to acknowledge. By the advice and encouragement of Dr. Kippis, I was in a great meaſure induced to undertake this tranſlation; by a continuance of the ſame friendly diſpoſition I was enabled cheerfully to proceed in it. The public will eaſily perceive a part of their obligation and mine to the ingenious Mr. Henley of Rendleſham, in the numerous and valuable notes which bear his ſignature; but I am alſo indebted to him for many corrections. Theſe are not the only friends, to whom I have been obliged on this occaſion: I will venture to mention in particular Mr. Wakefield of Nottingham, a name ſufficiently known in the claſſical world; and Mr. Foſter of Woolton, near Liverpool, whoſe careful and laborious reviſion of my manuſcript is the leaſt of the many favours he has conferred

upon me. To this companion of my youth, I can indeed with the ſtricteſt propriety apply the language of the Roman poet:

" Tecum etenim longos memini conſumere ſoles,
" Et tecum primas epulis decerpere noctes.
" Unum opus, & requiem pariter diſponimus
" ambo:
" Atque verecunda laxamus ſeria menſa.
" Non equidem hoc dubites, amborum fœdere
" certo
" Conſentire dies & ab uno ſidere duci.
" Noſtra vel æquali ſuſpendit tempora libra
" Parca tenax veri: ſeu nata fidelibus hora
" Dividit in geminos concordia fata duorum:
" Saturnumque gravem noſtro Jove frangimus
" una.
" Neſcio, quod certe eſt, quod me tibi temperat
" aſtrum."

James-Street Terrace,
Buckingham-Gate,
March 1, 1787.

*** The Author's Notes are all particularly diſtinguiſhed. Thoſe marked M. are by Profeſſor Michaelis; thoſe marked S. H. are by Mr. Henley; and thoſe marked T. by the Tranſlator.

THE

AUTHOR's PREFACE,

PREFIXED TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

I SHALL endeavour in a few words to explain the additions and improvements, which have been made to this Edition.

I have reviſed the whole work; I have added ſome things, I have corrected many; and eſpecially in the notes. I have however refrained from all corrections which did not appear abſolutely neceſſary. If any reader ſhould object, that many paſſages remain, which might be amended, as

being ſcarcely eſtabliſhed upon the grounds of certainty and conviction; I have only to urge in my own defence, that on very obſcure and difficult ſubjects, it has always appeared to me ſufficient to propoſe a probable explication: nor can I eſteem that to be correction, which only ſubſtitutes one conjecture for another.

In other reſpects this Edition has received conſiderable improvements. In the firſt place I am greatly indebted to the friendly communications of the learned Dr. Kennicott, for the variations of the different copies in ſeveral paſſages of the Old Teſtament, which I have quoted. I have diſtinguiſhed his notes by inverted commas, and by the letter K. ſubjoined. The Manuſcripts are numbered according to the Catalogue annexed to that learned

author's

author's Diſſertation on the Hebrew Text [1]. I have, moreover, added ſome obſervations of the learned Dr. Hunt, Profeſſor of the Hebrew and Arabic languages, which he kindly communicated at my requeſt. Theſe alſo I have diſtinguiſhed by inverted commas, and the letter H. ſubjoined.

After this Edition was committed to the preſs, I was favoured with a ſight of the Gottingen Edition, publiſhed under the inſpection of the learned and ingenious Profeſſor of Philoſophy in that Univerſity, John David Michaelis, and greatly improved and illuſtrated by him. To this were added his notes and additions, in which he has with great candour ſupplied my defects, and

[1] In the third Edition, the Manuſcript Copies are not cited according to theſe numbers, which are neceſſarily changed in the Bible publiſhed by Dr. K. but it is only mentioned in how many Manuſcripts the different reading occurs. Some different readings alſo are cited at large.

corrected my errors. Theſe, with the preface entire, and with a few additions to the notes, communicated to me by the author, (who would have added more, but that he was prevented by the increaſing buſineſs of the Univerſity) I have printed in a ſeparate volume, leſt my readers ſhould be deprived of theſe very learned and excellent illuſtrations: and I choſe to do it in a ſeparate ſtate, that the purchaſers of the firſt Edition might partake equally of the benefit. Whatever ſome of theſe notes may contain repugnant to my own ſentiments, I have thought it better to ſubmit them in this form to the judgment of the reader, than, by retracing my former ground, to divert his attention into a controverſy, unpleaſant, and probably fruitleſs.

CON-

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III. *In what Manner the word* Maſhal *implies the idea of Sublimity—Sublimity of language and ſentiment—On what account the poetic diction of the Hebrews, either conſidered in itſelf, or compared with proſe compoſition, merits an appellation expreſſive of ſublimity—The ſublimity of the poetic diction ariſes from the paſſions—How far the poetic diction differs from proſe among the Hebrews—Certain forms of poetic diction and conſtruction exemplified from* Job, Chap. iii. 302

LEC-

LECTURE XV.

OF SUBLIMITY OF EXPRESSION.

The character of the Poetic Dialect further illuſtrated by examples of different kinds from the Song of Moſes, DEUT. xxxii.—*The frequent and ſudden tranſition from one perſon to another; its cauſe and effects—The uſe of the Tenſes in a manner quite different from common language: the reaſons of this—The Hebrew language peculiar in this reſpect—The future is often ſpoken of in the perfect preſent, and the paſt in the future Tenſe: the reaſon of the former eaſy to be explained; the latter is a matter of conſiderable difficulty, which neither the Commentators, the Tranſlators, nor even the Grammarians have elucidated—Some examples of this, and the explanation of them—The frequent uſe of this form of conſtruction may be conſidered as characteriſtical of the Poetic Dialect* Page 323

LECTURE XVI.

OF SUBLIMITY OF SENTIMENT.

Sublimity of ſentiment ariſes, either from elevation of mind, or from ſome vehement paſſion; in each, it is either natural, or the effect of divine inſpiration—Elevation of mind is diſplayed in the greatneſs of the ſubject, the adjuncts, and the imagery—Examples from the deſcriptions of the Divine Majeſty; of the works and attributes of the Deity; alſo from the diſplay of the Divine Power in the form of Interrogation and Irony—The Hebrew poets attribute the human paſſions to the Deity without departing from ſublimity; and that frequently when the imagery appears leſs conſiſtent with the Divine Majeſty: the reaſon of this 346

LECTURES

ON THE

SACRED POETRY

OF THE

HEBREWS.

LECTURE I.

THE INTRODUCTION.

OF THE USES AND DESIGN OF POETRY.

The purpoſe of poetry is to inſtruct while it gives pleaſure; inſtruction being the end, and pleaſure the means—Illuſtrated by examples from the different ſpecies of poetry—The Didactic—The Epic—Tragedy—Lyric—the lighter kinds of poetry, which are calculated as well for the amuſement of our leiſure as for the ornament and improvement of literature—Sacred poetry; whence a tranſition to the immediate object of theſe Lectures.

THOUGH our preſent meeting be, on ſome accounts, rather earlier than I could have wiſhed; yet I cheerfully embrace

[a] The Prælector of Poetry at Oxford is obliged by the ſtatute to read his inaugural lecture the firſt Tueſday in

brace the opportunity which it affords me of aſſuring you, Gentlemen, that to this undertaking (whether conſidered as a duty impoſed, or as a favour conferred upon me) I bring, if no other accompliſhment, at leaſt induſtry and inclination. I could, indeed, more patiently bear to be accuſed of wanting genius, fluency, or elegance, than of wanting dili-

the Term ſubſequent to his election; and it appears by the Univerſity Regiſter, that Mr. Lowth was elected to the Profeſſorſhip on the 21ſt of May, 1741, in the vacation between Eaſter and Act Term. As this vacation is only thirteen days, commencing the Thurſday before Whitſunday, and ending the Wedneſday after Trinity Sunday, the longeſt interval that could poſſibly happen between his election and his firſt Lecture is ſomewhat leſs than three weeks: It might probably be much ſhorter. Even in his youth Biſhop Lowth was diſtinguiſhed by the cautious accuracy of his judgment; he therefore very properly introduces a plan, upon which he was to work for ten years (the uſual term of the Profeſſorſhip) with much modeſty and reſerve; and when he ſpeaks of meeting his conſtituents *rather early* (paulo maturius) he muſt be underſtood as regretting the little time, which by the Statute was allowed him to prepare his introductory addreſs. This fact will ſerve alſo to explain ſome paſſages towards the concluſion of the Lecture.

For the ſubſtance of this note I am indebted to a very intelligent friend at Oxford, and am happy in this opportunity of returning my beſt acknowledgments. T.

gence

gence in the exerciſe of that office, to which your authority has called me, or gratitude in the acceptance of that favour, which (whatever it be in itſelf) is undoubtedly great, ſince conferred on me by you. For to judge rightly of obligations of this kind, regard muſt be had not only to the favour itſelf, but to the perſons who confer it, and to the perſon on whom it is conferred. When, therefore, I reflect, that the ſtation, to which I am invited, has been adorned by men of the firſt rank in genius and learning; when I regard you, whoſe favour can add dignity to the moſt reſpectable characters; when, in fine, I conſider myſelf, who could never have expected or hoped from my own merits for any public teſtimony of your approbation; I receive this appointment as an honour, for which the utmoſt exertions of labour and aſſiduity will be but a very inadequate return. This part of my duty, however, though feebly and imperfectly, I would wiſh you to believe I moſt willingly perform: for to an ingenuous mind nothing can be more agreeable than the expreſſion, or even the ſenſe of gratitude; and the remembrance of the obligation will rather ſti-

mulate than depreſs. Other conſiderations have, I muſt confeſs, rendered me not a little ſolicitous: I am appointed to ſuperintend a particular department of ſcience, which you have conſtantly diſtinguiſhed by your preſence and attention; and a ſubject is to be diſcuſſed, which not only you have judged worthy of your cultivation, and the public countenance of the Univerſity, but which has hitherto received in this place all the embelliſhments of grace and elegance, of which it is naturally ſuſceptible. Should it therefore fall into neglect or diſrepute hereafter, I fear, that I ſhall be compelled to acknowledge the fault to have been mine, and not that of the inſtitution itſelf.

Whatever degree of ſucceſs indeed may attend my endeavours, let it not for a moment be ſuſpected, that the deſign is not altogether deſerving of approbation. For can there be any thing of more real importance to literature itſelf, can any thing be more conſiſtent with the ends for which this Univerſity was founded, than that the art, of whoſe aſſiſtance every other art and profeſſion has ſo greatly availed itſelf, ſhould be aſſigned a place among the reſt? That art, ſo venerable

rable for its antiquity, ſo delightful in itſelf; that art, which is in a manner congenial to humanity, and which ſets off Nature by the moſt agreeable repreſentation of her beauties: which among the ignorant and the learned, the idle and the ſtudious, has ever obtained favour, admiration and regard. Nothing ſurely can be more worthy of a liberal and accompliſhed mind, than to perceive what is perfect, and what is defective in an art, the beauties of which frequently lie beneath the ſurface; to underſtand what is graceful, what is becoming, in what its excellencies conſiſt, and in a word to diſcover and reliſh thoſe delicate touches of grace and elegance, that lie beyond the reach of vulgar apprehenſion. From theſe ſubtile reſearches after beauty and taſte, there is alſo the faireſt reaſon to apprehend that the judgment itſelf will receive ſome acceſſions of ſtrength and acuteneſs, which it may ſucceſsfully employ upon other objects, and upon other occaſions. Such at leaſt appear to have been the ſentiments of that excellent perſon [2], to whoſe munificence

[2] The poetic Lecture was inſtituted by HENRY BIRKHEAD, LL.D. formerly Fellow of All Souls. *Author's Note.*

Poetry has been long indebted for her admiſſion into the circle of thoſe ſciences which are cultivated in this Univerſity. For poſſeſſing a mind not only inſtructed in the moſt uſeful branches of knowledge, but adorned with the moſt elegant arts; and having imbibed the firſt principles of education in a ſeminary, where the moſt important and ſacred ſubjects, recommended by all the elegance of polite literature, have been heretofore, and ſtill continue to be, ſtudied with vigour and effect; he ſaw and experienced, how much an attention to theſe elegancies would contribute to the inveſtigation or illuſtration of the ſeverer branches of erudition, and how ſtrict the alliance between Philoſophy and the Muſes.

The deſign, therefore, of the author of this Inſtitution, as well as the uſual practice on occaſions like the preſent, reminds me, Gentlemen, of the propriety (though a matter already familiar to moſt of you) of premiſing a few ſuch obſervations, as appear leaſt exceptionable concerning the end and utility of the poetic art.

Poetry is commonly underſtood to have two objects in view, namely, advantage and pleaſure,

pleaſure, or rather an union of both. I wiſh thoſe who have furniſhed us with this definition, had rather propoſed utility as its ultimate object [3], and pleaſure as the means by which that end may be effectually accompliſhed. The Philoſopher and the Poet indeed ſeem principally to differ in the means, by which they purſue the ſame end. Each ſuſtains the character of a preceptor, which the one is thought beſt to ſupport, if he teach with accuracy, with ſubtlety, and with perſpicuity; the other, with ſplendour, harmony and elegance. The one makes his

[3] There are however poems which only delight, but which are not therefore to be condemned. Some, which though they contain no moral precepts, no commendation of virtue, no ſentiment curious or abſtruſe, yet dreſs and adorn common ideas in ſuch ſplendour of diction and harmony of numbers, as to afford exquiſite pleaſure; they bring, as it were before our eyes, the woods and ſtreams, and all the elegant and enchanting objects of nature. The excellence of ſuch poems is founded upon the ſame principle with that of a beautiful picture, which is more valued for contributing to pleaſure only, than many other things are for their actual utility. What follows I greatly approve: only I would not wiſh it to be denied, that there are ſome poems which have no deſign but that of giving pleaſure, and that this is even a laudable end; nor indeed does our Author altogether ſuppoſe this impoſſible. M.

appeal to reaſon only, independent of the paſſions; the other addreſſes the reaſon in ſuch a manner, as even to engage the paſſions on his ſide. The one proceeds to Virtue and Truth by the neareſt and moſt compendious ways; the other leads to the ſame point through certain deflexions and deviations, by a winding, but pleaſanter path. It is the part of the former ſo to deſcribe and explain theſe objects, that we muſt neceſſarily become acquainted with them; it is the part of the latter ſo to dreſs and adorn them, that of our own accord we muſt love and embrace them.

I therefore lay it down as a fundamental maxim, that Poetry is uſeful, chiefly becauſe it is agreeable; and ſhould I, as we are apt to do, attribute too much to my favourite occupation, I truſt Philoſophy will forgive me, when I add, that the writings of the Poet are more uſeful than thoſe of the Philoſopher, inaſmuch as they are more agreeable. To illuſtrate this poſition by well-known examples: Can it be ſuppoſed that the more learned Romans, when they became devoted to the doctrine of Epicurus, did not more highly eſteem, and more frequently apply to the admirable poem of Lucretius,

Lucretius, than to Catius, or Amafanius, or even the commentaries of Epicurus himſelf? Who can believe that even the moſt taſteleſs could peruſe the writings on agriculture, either of the learned Varro, or (not to mention the elder Cato) of Columella, an author by no means deficient in elegance, with the ſame pleaſure and attention as that moſt delightful and moſt perfect work, the Georgics of Virgil? A work in which he has equalled the moſt reſpectable writers in the ſolidity of his matter [4], and has greatly excelled the moſt elegant in the incredible harmony of his

[4] SENECA ſeems to detract from the authority of VIRGIL's *Georgics*, deſcribing him as an author, "who "ſtudied truth leſs than elegance; and wiſhed rather to "delight the reader, than to inſtruct the huſbandman." COLUMELLA, however, ſeems to be of a very different opinion, and I cannot help thinking him a much better judge. He continually cites the *Georgics*, never with any degree of blame, and generally with the greateſt applauſe: "this mode we ſhall purſue, if we may truſt the "poet, whoſe authority on ſuch occaſions I eſteem little "leſs than an oracle." *Lib.* 4. "I ſhall frequently make "uſe of the authority of this divine poem." *Lib.* vii. 3. In the very matter for which SENECA finds fault with VIRGIL, namely, the time of ſowing millet, the reader will ſee how ignorantly the poet is cenſured by the philoſopher, if he conſults COLUMELLA, II. 9. PLIN. N. H. xviii. 7. PALLAD. III. 3. *Author's Note.*

numbers.

numbers. On the contrary, if Manilius, who is numbered (and rightly if we may credit his own teſtimony) among the writers of the Auguſtan age, has treated the engaging ſcience of Aſtronomy in ſuch low and inelegant verſe, as even ſcarcely to excel Julius Firmicus, a proſe writer on the ſame ſubject in a leſs poliſhed age, I will allow him the merit of a Philoſopher and Aſtronomer, but never can account him a Poet. For what is a Poet, deſtitute of harmony, of grace, and of all that conduces to allurement and delight? or how ſhould we derive advantage or improvement from an author, whom no man of taſte can endure to read? The reaſon, therefore, why Poetry is ſo ſtudious to embelliſh her precepts with a certain inviting ſweetneſs, and as it were

—"tincture them with the honey of the Muſes,"

is plainly, by ſuch ſeaſoning to conciliate favour to her doctrine, as is the practice even of phyſicians, who temper with pleaſant flavours their leaſt agreeable medicines:

"Thus the ſick infant's taſte diſguis'd to meet,
"They tinge the veſſel's brim with juices ſweet;
"The bitter draught his willing lip receives;
"He drinks deceiv'd, and ſo deceiv'd he lives;"

as

as Lucretius expreſſes himſelf in illuſtration of his own deſign, as well as that of Poetry in general.

But if it be manifeſt, even in authors who directly profeſs improvement and advantage, that thoſe will moſt efficaciouſly inſtruct, who afford moſt entertainment; the ſame will be ſtill more apparent in thoſe, who diſſembling the intention of inſtruction, exhibit only the blandiſhments of pleaſure; and while they treat of the moſt important things, of all the principles of moral action, all the offices of life, yet laying aſide the ſeverity of the preceptor, adduce at once all the decorations of elegance, and all the attractions of amuſement: who diſplay, as in a picture, the actions, the manners, the purſuits and paſſions of men; and by the force of imitation and fancy, by the harmony of numbers, by the taſte and variety of imagery, captivate the affections of the reader, and imperceptibly, or perhaps reluctantly, impel him to the purſuit of virtue. Such is the real purpoſe of heroic poetry; ſuch is the noble effect produced by the peruſal of Homer. And who ſo thoughtleſs, or ſo callous, as not to feel incredible pleaſure in that moſt

moſt agreeable occupation; who is not moved, aſtoniſhed, enraptured by the inſpiration of that moſt ſublime genius? Who ſo inanimate as not to ſee, not to feel inſcribed, or as it were imprinted upon his heart, his moſt excellent maxims concerning human life and manners? From Philoſophy a few cold precepts may be deduced; in Hiſtory ſome dull and ſpiritleſs examples of manners may be found: here we have the energetic voice of Virtue herſelf, here we behold her animated form. Poetry addreſſes her precepts not to the reaſon alone, ſhe calls the paſſions to her aid: ſhe not only exhibits examples, but infixes them in the mind. She ſoftens the wax with her peculiar ardour, and renders it more plaſtic to the artiſt's hand. Thus does Horace moſt truly and moſt juſtly apply this commendation to the poets:

" What's fair, and falſe, and right, theſe bards
" deſcribe,
" Better and plainer than the Stoic tribe:"

Plainer or more completely, becauſe they do not perplex their diſciples with the dry detail of parts and definitions, but ſo perfectly and ſo accurately delineate by examples of every kind,

the

the forms of the human paſſions and habits, the principles of ſocial and civilized life, that he, who from the ſchools of Philoſophy ſhould turn to the repreſentations of Homer, would feel himſelf tranſported from a narrow and intricate path to an extenſive and flouriſhing field. Better, becauſe the Poet teaches not by maxims and precepts, and in the dull, ſententious form; but by the harmony of verſe, by the beauty of imagery, by the ingenuity of the fable, by the exactneſs of imitation, he allures and intereſts the mind of the reader, he faſhions it to habits of virtue, and in a manner informs it with the ſpirit of integrity itſelf.

But if, from the Heroic we turn to the Tragic Muſe, to which Ariſtotle [5] indeed aſſigns the preference, becauſe of the true and perfect imitation, we ſhall yet more clearly evince the ſuperiority of Poetry over Philoſophy, on the principle of its being more agreeable. Tragedy is, in truth, no other than Philoſophy introduced upon the ſtage, retaining all its natural properties, remitting nothing of its native gravity, but aſſiſted and embelliſhed by other favouring

[5] *Poet.* Cap. ult.

circum-

circumſtances. What point, for inſtance, of moral diſcipline have the Tragic writers of Greece left untouched, or unadorned? What duty of life, what principle of political economy, what motive or precept for the government of the paſſions, what commendation of virtue is there, which they have not treated of with fulneſs, variety and learning? The moral of Æſchylus (not only a poet, but a Pythagorean) will ever be admired. Nor were Sophocles and Euripides leſs illuſtrious for the reputation of wiſdom; the latter of whom was the diſciple of Socrates and Anaxagoras, and was known among his friends by the title of the Dramatic Philoſopher. In theſe authors ſurely, the allurements of Poetry afforded ſome acceſſion to the empire of Philoſophy; nor indeed has any man arrived at the ſummit of Poetic fame, who did not previouſly lay the foundation of his art in true Philoſophy.

Should it be objected, that ſome have been eminent in this walk of Poetry, who never ſtudied in the ſchools of the Philoſophers, nor enjoyed the advantages of an education above the common herd of mankind; I anſwer, that I am not contending about the vulgar

vulgar opinion, or concerning the meaning of a word: the man who, by the force of genius and obſervation, has arrived at a perfect knowledge of mankind, who has acquainted himſelf with the natural powers of the human mind, and the cauſes by which the paſſions are excited and repreſſed; who not only in words can explain, but can delineate to the ſenſes every emotion of the ſoul; who can excite, can temper and regulate the paſſions; ſuch a man, though he may not have acquired erudition by the common methods, I eſteem a true Philoſopher. The paſſion of jealouſy, its cauſes, circumſtances, its progreſs, and effects, I hold to be more accurately, more copiouſly, more ſatisfactorily deſcribed in one of the dramas of Shakeſpeare, than in all the diſputations of the ſchools of Philoſophy.

Now if Tragedy be of ſo truly a philoſophical nature; and if to all the force and gravity of wiſdom it add graces and allurements peculiarly its own, the harmony of verſe, the contrivance of the fable, the excellence of imitation, the truth of action; ſhall we not ſay that Philoſophy muſt yield to Poetry in point of utility; or ſhall we not rather

rather ſay, that the former is greatly indebted to the latter, of whoſe aſſiſtance and recommendation it makes ſo advantageous a uſe, in order to attain its particular purpoſe, utility or improvement?

"But if the force of imitation and fable be ſo great, the force of truth itſelf muſt ſurely appear much greater: we ſhould therefore apply to Hiſtory rather than to Poetry for inſtruction in morals." This however is a miſtaken notion. Hiſtory is confined within too narrow limits; Hiſtory is ſubject to laws peculiar to itſelf, and too ſevere to admit of ſuch an application. It relates things as they really were, it traces events under the guidance of authority; it muſt exhibit what has happened, not what might or ought to have happened. It muſt not deviate in queſt of reaſonable inſtruction or plauſible conjecture, but confine itſelf to that part, which the ſtubbornneſs of fact has preſcribed. Hiſtory treats of things and perſons which have been in actual exiſtence; the ſubjects of Poetry are infinite and univerſal. The one inveſtigates cauſes through the uncertain medium of conjecture; the other demonſtrates them with clearneſs and certainty. The one catches

catches the caſual glimpſes of truth, whenever they break forth to the view; the other contemplates her unclouded appearance. Hiſtory purſues her appointed journey by a direct path; Poetry ranges uncontrolled over the wide expanſe of nature. The former muſt make her precepts ſubſervient to the ſubject; the latter forms a ſubject ſubordinate to her precepts and deſign. For theſe reaſons Poetry is defined by Ariſtotle to be ſomething of a more ſerious and philoſophical nature than Hiſtory[6]; nor is our Bacon (a name not inferior in literature) of a different ſentiment. The ſubject itſelf, and the authority of ſo great a man, require that the paſſage ſhould be quoted in his own words. "Since the ſenſible world is in dignity inferior to the rational ſoul; Poetry ſeems "to endow human nature with that which "is beyond the power of Hiſtory, and to "gratify the mind with at leaſt the ſhadow "of things, where the ſubſtance cannot be "had. For if the matter be properly conſidered, an argument may be drawn from "Poetry, that a ſuperior dignity in things,

[6] Και Φιλοσοφωτερον και σπουδαιοτερον ποιησις ιστοριας εστιν. ARIST. *Poet.* c. 9. *Author's Note.*

" a more perfect order, and a more beautiful
" variety delights the ſoul of man, than is
" found in nature ſince the fall. As, there-
" fore, the actions and events, which are the
" ſubject of true Hiſtory, are not of ſufficient
" amplitude to content the mind of man;
" Poetry is at hand, and invents actions of
" a more heroic nature. Becauſe true Hiſ-
" tory reports the ſucceſs of events not pro-
" portionably to deſert, or according to the
" virtue or vice that has been diſplayed in
" them; Poetry corrects this, and repreſents
" events and fortunes according to juſtice
" and merit: Becauſe true Hiſtory from the
" obvious ſimilarity of actions, and the ſa-
" tiety which this circumſtance muſt occa-
" ſion, frequently creates a diſtaſte in the
" mind; Poetry cheers and refreſhes it, ex-
" hibiting things uncommon, varied, and
" full of viciſſitude. As Poetry, therefore,
" contributes not only to pleaſure, but to
" magnanimity and good morals; it is de-
" ſervedly ſuppoſed to participate in ſome
" meaſure of divine inſpiration; ſince it raiſes
" the mind, and fills it with ſublime ideas,
" by proportioning the appearances of things

" to

" to the deſires of the mind; and not ſub-
" mitting the mind to things, like Reaſon
" and Hiſtory[7]."

That elevation of ſentiment, that inſpiration, that uſefulneſs in forming the manners, is however by no means ſo peculiar to the Epic (to which that great man chiefly refers in this paſſage) as to exclude the claim of every other ſpecies of Poetry; there are others which alſo deſerve to partake in the commendation: and firſt the Ode,

" With thoughts that breathe, and words that
" burn;"

which, though in ſome reſpects inferior to what are called the higher ſpecies of Poetry, yields to none in force, ardour, and ſometimes even in dignity and ſolemnity. Every ſpecies of Poetry has in fact its peculiar mode of acting on the human feelings; the general effect is perhaps the ſame. The Epic accompliſhes its deſign with more leiſure, with more conſideration and care, and therefore probably with greater certainty. It more gradually inſinuates itſelf, it penetrates, it moves, it delights; now riſing to a high de-

[7] *De Augm. Scient.* L. II. 13.

gree of ſublimity, now ſubſiding to its accuſtomed ſmoothneſs; and conducting the reader through a varied and delightful ſcene, it applies a gentle conſtraint to the mind, making its impreſſion by the forcible nature of this application, but more eſpecially by its continuance. The Ode, on the contrary, ſtrikes with an inſtantaneous effect, amazes, and as it were ſtorms the affections. The one may be compared to a flame, which fanned by the winds, gradually ſpreads itſelf on all ſides, and at laſt involves every object in the conflagration; the other to a flaſh of lightning, which inſtantaneouſly burſts forth,

"With inſtant ruin threats great Nature's frame,
"And ſhoots through ev'ry part the vivid flame."

The amazing power of Lyric Poetry in directing the paſſions, in forming the manners, in maintaining civil life, and particularly in exciting and cheriſhing that generous elevation of ſentiment, on which the very exiſtence of public virtue ſeems to depend, will be ſufficiently apparent by only contemplating thoſe monuments of Genius, which Greece has bequeathed to poſterity. If we examine the poems of Pindar (which though

by no means accounted the moſt excellent of their kind, by ſome ſtrange fatality are almoſt the only ſpecimens that remain) how exquiſite muſt have been the pleaſure, how vivid the ſenſation to the Greek, whoſe ordinary amuſement it was to ſing, or hear them ſung! For this kind of entertainment was not confined to perſons of taſte and learning, but had grown into general uſe. When he heard his Gods, his heroes, his anceſtors received into the number of the Gods, celebrated in a manner ſo glorious, ſo divine, would not his boſom glow with the deſire of fame, with the moſt fervid emulation of virtue, with a patriotiſm, immoderate perhaps, but honourable and uſeful in the higheſt degree? Is it wonderful, that he ſhould be ſo elevated with this greatneſs of mind (ſhall I call it?) or rather inſolence and pride, as to eſteem every other people mean, barbarous and contemptible, in compariſon with himſelf and his own countrymen? It is almoſt unneceſſary to remind this aſſembly, that, in the ſacred Games (which afforded ſo much ſupport to the warlike virtue of Greece*) no

* Conſult the Diſſertation of the learned GILBERT WEST on the Olympic Games. Sect. xvii.

inconſiderable ſhare of dignity and eſteem reſulted from the verſes of the poets; nor did the Olympic crown exhibit a more ample reward to the candidate for victory, than the encomium of Pindar or Steſichorus. I wiſh, indeed, that time had not invidiouſly deprived us of the works of the latter, whoſe majeſty and excellence commanded univerſal applauſe, whom Dionyſius[9] preferred before every other Lyric poet, becauſe he made choice of the ſublimeſt and moſt ſplendid ſubjects, and in the amplification of them preſerved moſt completely the manners and the dignity of his characters. To Alcæus, however, the ſame author attributes the moſt excellent manner of treating political ſubjects[10]. As a man, indeed, how great! as a citizen how ſtrenuous! What a ſpirited defender of the laws and conſtitution of his country! What a vigorous oppoſer of tyrants! who conſecrated equally his ſword and his lyre on the altar of Freedom! whoſe prophetic Muſe ranging through every region, acted as the ſacred guardian, not for the preſent moment only, but for future ages; not of his own city alone, but of the whole

[9] DION. HALICAR. T. II. p. 123. Edit. Hudſon.
[10] Ibid.

common-

commonwealth of Greece. Poetry ſuch as this, ſo vehement, ſo animated, is certainly to be eſteemed highly efficacious as well in exciting the human mind to virtue, as in purifying it from every mean and vicious propenſity; but ſtill more eſpecially does it conduce to cheriſh and ſupport that vigour of ſoul, that generous temper and ſpirit, which is both the offſpring and guardian of Liberty. Could an apprehenſion ariſe, that another Piſiſtratus would meditate the enſlaving of that city, where at every banquet, nay, in the ſtreets and in the meaneſt aſſemblies of the common people, that convivial ode was daily ſung, which bears the name of Calliſtratus? An author known to us only by this compoſition, which however ſufficiently demonſtrates him to have been an admirable poet and an excellent citizen [11]:

" Verdant

[11] Athenæus, *Lib.* XV. This *Skolion* (or convivial ſong) ſome have attributed to Alcæus: but not conformably with ſtrict chronology; for Alcæus flouriſhed about eighty years before the death of Hipparchus. But Hesychius has preſerved the name of the author from oblivion, directly aſſigning the poem to Callistratus. This poem was ſo celebrated at Athens, that it was ſung at almoſt every banquet, as we learn from Aristophanes, Αχαρν. 977.

Verdant myrtle's branchy pride,
Shall my thirſty blade entwine:
Such HARMODIUS deck'd thy ſide,
Such ARISTOGITON thine.

Nobleſt

" Grim viſag'd War ſhall never be my gueſt,
" Nor at my table ſing Harmodius' praiſe:
" Such lawleſs riot mars our temp'rate joys."

" He ſhall never ſing Harmodius with me:" that is, he ſhall never be my gueſt. Upon this paſſage the SCHOLIAST: " In their convivial meetings they ſung a certain " ballad of Harmodius, which begins Φιλτατε Αρμοδιε. κ. λ." Alſo in the ſame comedy, 1092, theſe ſongs are enumerated among the other apparatus of the entertainment:

" The ſprightly dance: Harmodius! thy delight."

There is an alluſion to the ſame Ανσις. 633.

" My ſword I'll bear hid in a myrtle branch;
" And like Ariſtogiton walk in arms."

It is evident from this ballad, that the conſpirators, when they aſſaulted Hipparchus, concealed their daggers in thoſe myrtle garlands, which, if I miſtake not, were carried by all who aſſiſted at the ſacred rites of the *Panathenaic* ſacrifice: and this is indeed confirmed by the Scholiaſt upon Ariſtophanes, in the paſſage before referred to: " For theſe men, Harmodius and Ariſtogiton, haſtily " drawing their ſwords out of the myrtle boughs, fell " furiouſly upon the tyrant." Hence perhaps aroſe the cuſtom, that whoever ſung any convivial ſong in company, always held a branch of myrtle in his hand. See PLUTARCH I, *Symp. Queſt.* 1. *Author's Note.*

Our

Nobleſt youths! in iſlands bleſt,
Not like recreant idlers dead;
You with fleet PELIDES reſt,
And with Godlike DIOMED.

Myrtle ſhall our brows entwine,
While the Muſe your Fame ſhall tell;
'Twas at Pallas' ſacred ſhrine,
At your feet the Tyrant fell.

Then in Athens all was peace,
Equal laws and liberty:
Nurſe of arts and eye of Greece,
People valiant, firm and free[12]!

If

Our COLLINS in particular has attributed this poem to ALCÆUS, in the following beautiful lines:

" What new Alcæus, fancy bleſt,
" Shall ſing the ſword, in myrtles dreſt,
" At Wiſdom's ſhrine a while its flame concealing,
" (What place ſo fit to ſeal a deed renown'd?)
" Till ſhe her brighteſt lightnings round revealing,
" ſt leap'd in glory forth, and dealt her prompted
" wound." *Ode to Liberty.*

[12] The above imitation, all but the third ſtanza, is taken from a paraphraſe of this poem, ſaid to be the production of Sir W. JONES. The following is a more literal tranſlation by Mr. CUMBERLAND:

" He is not dead, our beſt belov'd
" Harmodius is not loſt,
" But with Troy's conquerors remov'd
" To ſome more happy coaſt.

" Bind

If after the memorable *Ides of March*, any one of the Tyrannicides had delivered to the populace ſuch a poem as this, had introduced it to the Suburra, to the aſſemblies of the Forum, or had put it into the mouths of the common people, the dominion of the Cæſars and its adherents would have been totally extinguiſhed: and I am firmly perſuaded, that one ſtanza of this ſimple ballad of Harmodius would have been more effectual than all the Philippics of Cicero.

There are ſome other ſpecies of Poetry, which with us generally appear in an eaſy and familiar ſtyle, but formerly aſſumed ſometimes a graver and more important character. Such is the Elegy; I do not ſpeak of the light and amorous Elegy of the moderns, but that ancient, ſerious, ſacred, and didactic Elegy,

" Bind then the myrtle's myſtic bough,
" And wave your ſwords around,
" For ſo they ſtruck the tyrant low,
" And ſo their ſwords were bound.

" Perpetual objects of our love
" The patriot pair ſhall be,
" Who in Minerva's ſacred grove
" Struck and ſet Athens free."

Obſerver, N° 49.

the

the preceptreſs of morals, the lawgiver of nations, the oracle of virtue. Not to enter into a detail of authors, of whoſe works we are not in poſſeſſion, and of whoſe merits we conſequently can form no adequate judgment, it will be ſufficient to inſtance Solon, the moſt venerable character of antiquity, the wiſeſt of legiſlators, and withal a poet of no mean reputation. When any thing difficult or perplexing occurred in the adminiſtration of public affairs, we are informed that he had recourſe to Poetry [11]. Were the laws to be maintained or enforced upon any particular emergency; was the indolence or licentiouſneſs of the citizens to be reproved; were their minds to be ſtimulated to the love of liberty, he immediately attacked them with ſome poetical production, bold, animated, and ſevere, in the higheſt tone of cenſorial gravity, and yet in no reſpect deficient in elegance:

"Before the awful peal the lightning flies,
"And gathering clouds impending ſtorms pre-
"ſage;
"By ſouls aſpiring civil freedom dies;
"The people's madneſs whets the tyrant's rage."

[11] See PLUTARCH & DIOG. LAERT. *Life of Solon.*

It

It is a well-known fact, that Athens was altogether indebted for the recovery of Salamis to the verſes of Solon; even contrary to their own inclination and intention. After they had, from repeated overthrows, fallen into the deepeſt deſpair, inſomuch that it was made a capital offence, even to propoſe the renewal of the war, or the reclaiming of the iſland, ſuch was the influence of that ſingle poem, which begins—"Let us march to Sa-"lamis," that as if pronounced by a prophet, inſtinct with divine enthuſiaſm, the people, propelled by a kind of celeſtial inſpiration, flew immediately to arms, became clamorous for war, and fought the field of battle with ſuch incredible ardour, that by the violence of their onſet, after a great ſlaughter of the enemy, they atchieved almoſt deciſive victory.

We have alſo ſome remains of the celebrated Tyrtæus, who

——"manly ſouls to martial deeds
"By verſe excited."

The whole ſcope and ſubject of his compoſitions, is the celebration of valour and patriotiſm, and the immortal glory of thoſe who

who bravely fell in battle:—compoſitions, which could impart ſome degree of courage even to the timid and unmanly; by which, indeed, he elevated the minds of the Lacedemonians, which had been long debilitated and depreſſed, to the certain hope of victory. The fact is well known, and had it not been corroborated by the teſtimony of ſo many authors, it would doubtleſs have been thought by ſome incredible; though I confeſs it appears to me no leſs ſupported by the reaſon of things than by the authority of the hiſtorian. It is impoſſible that men ſhould act otherwiſe than with the moſt heroic ardour, the moſt undaunted reſolution, who ſung to the martial pipe, when arranged in military order, marching to the onſet, or perhaps actually engaged, ſuch ſtrains as theſe:

Our country's voice invites the brave
The glorious toils of war to try;
Curs'd be the coward or the ſlave,
Who ſhuns the fight, who fears to die!

Obedient to the high command,
Full fraught with patriotic fire,
Deſcends a ſmall but truſty band,
And ſcarce reſtrains th' impatient ire.

Lo the hoſtile crouds advance!
Firmly we their might oppoſe,
Helm to helm, and lance to lance,
In awful pomp we meet our foes.

Unaw'd by fear, untaught to yield,
We boldly tread th' enſanguin'd plain:
And ſcorn to quit the martial field,
Though drench'd in blood, though heap'd with ſlain.

For though ſtern Death aſſail the brave,
His virtues endleſs life ſhall claim;
His fame ſhall mock th' invidious grave,
To times unborn a ſacred name!

Not entirely to omit the lighter kinds of Poetry, many will think that we allow them full enough, when we ſuppoſe their utility to conſiſt in the entertainment which they afford. Nor is this, Gentlemen, altogether to be deſpiſed, if it be conſidered that this entertainment, this levity itſelf, affords relaxation to the mind when wearied with the laborious inveſtigation of truth; that it unbends the underſtanding, after intenſe application; reſtores it when debilitated; and refreſhes it, even by an interchange and variety of ſtudy. In this we are countenanced by the example and authority of the greateſt men

men of Greece, by that of Solon, Plato and Ariſtotle; among the Romans, by that of Scipio and Lælius, Julius and Auguſtus Cæſar, Varro and Brutus, who filled up the intervals of their more important engagements, their ſeverer ſtudies, with the agreeableneſs and hilarity of this poetical talent. Nature indeed ſeems in this moſt wiſely to have conſulted for us, who, while ſhe impels us to the knowledge of truth, which is frequently remote, and only to be proſecuted with indefatigable induſtry, has provided alſo theſe pleaſing recreations, as a refuge to the mind, in which it might occaſionally ſhelter itſelf, and find an agreeable relief from languor and anxiety.

But there is yet a further advantage to be derived from theſe ſtudies, which ought not to be neglected; for beſide poſſeſſing in reſerve a certain ſolace of your labours, from the ſame repoſitory you will alſo be ſupplied with many of the brighteſt ornaments of literature. The firſt object is, indeed, to perceive and comprehend clearly the reaſons, principles, and relations of things; the next is to be able to explain your conceptions not only with perſpicuity, but with a degree of elegance. For in

this reſpect we are all of us in ſome meaſure faſtidious: we are ſeldom contented with a jejune and naked expoſition even of the moſt ſerious ſubjects, ſome of the ſeaſonings of art, ſome ornaments of ſtyle, ſome ſplendor of diction, are of neceſſity to be adopted; even ſome regard is due to the harmony of numbers, and to the gratification of the ear. In all theſe reſpects, though I grant that the language of Poetry differs very widely from that of all other kinds of compoſition, yet he, who has beſtowed ſome time and attention on the peruſal and imitation of the Poets, will, I am perſuaded, find his underſtanding exerciſed and improved as it were in this Paleſtra, the vigour and activity of his imagination increaſed, and even his manner of expreſſion to have inſenſibly acquired a tinge from this elegant intercourſe. Thus we obſerve in perſons, who have been taught to dance, a certain indeſcribable grace and manner; though they do not form their common geſture and gait by any certain rules, yet there reſults from that exerciſe a degree of elegance, which accompanies thoſe who have been proficients in it, even when they have relinquiſhed the practice. Nor is it in the leaſt

leaſt improbable, that both Cæſar and Tully [14] (the one the moſt elegant, the other the moſt eloquent of the Romans) might have derived conſiderable aſſiſtance from the cultivation of this branch of polite literature, ſince it is well known, that both of them were addicted to the reading of Poetry, and even exerciſed in the compoſition of it [15]. This too is ſo apparent

[14] "It will not be inconſiſtent with theſe ſtudies to "amuſe yourſelf with Poetry:—Tully indeed appears to "me to have acquired that luminous and ſplendid diction "which he poſſeſſed, by occaſionally reſorting to ſuch "occupations." QUINCT. *Lib.* X. 5. *Author's Note.*

[15] It may be doubted whether CICERO was indebted for his excellence as an orator to the cultivation of Poetry. He would have been accounted but a moderate orator, if his orations had only equalled his poetry, had he ſpoken as he ſung:

"Fortune foretun'd the dying notes of Rome:
"Till I thy Conſul ſole, conſol'd thy doom."

I do not expect from CICERO the poliſh and perfection of VIRGIL, but one might at leaſt have hoped to meet in his verſe ſome of that fire and fancy which appears in his oratory. The caſe however is far otherwiſe, for he appears not deficient in art, but in nature; in that energy and enthuſiaſm, which is called the *poetic furor*.

Upon very mature conſideration, indeed, I will venture to profeſs, that however Poetry may contribute to

apparent in the writings of Plato, that he is thought not only to have erred in his judg-

form an accompliſhed orator, I hardly ever expect to find the ſame perſon excellent in both arts. The language of Poetry has ſomething in it ſo different and contrary to that of Oratory, that we ſeldom find thoſe who have applied much to the one riſe above mediocrity in the other. The chief excellence of an Orator conſiſts in perſpicuity, and in ſuch a degree of perſpicuity as is neceſſary to render the compoſition intelligible even to the common people: but, though obſcurity be not a neceſſary adjunct of a good poem, it muſt be conſiderably ſuperior to the language and comprehenſion of the vulgar to rank above mediocrity. The Orator muſt not deviate from the common and beaten track of language; the Poet muſt aim at a happy boldneſs of diction, and wander into new paths. The Orator in order to be generally underſtood, is neceſſarily more copious and prolix not only than the Poet, but than all other writers; the chief commendation of the Poet is brevity. A poem is always enervated by circumlocutions, unleſs new lights of ſentiment and language are thrown in. For theſe and other reaſons, I am of opinion, that if a well-cultivated genius for Poetry ſhould apply earneſtly to Oratory, he might indeed prove ſuch an Orator as would pleaſe a learned audience, and not be unpleaſing to the populace; but ſuch a man will never prove a very popular Orator, on whom the people ſhall gaze with admiration and rapture, and who ſhall acquire a perfect aſcendancy over all their paſſions: and he who is by nature an Orator, may poſſibly be a Poet for the multitude, or by art and ſtudy, and the imitation of the beſt models, may make a decent proficiency, but he never can be a great and divine Poet. M.

ment,

ment, but to have acted an ungrateful part, when he excluded from his imaginary commonwealth that art, to which he was ſo much indebted for the ſplendour and elegance of his genius, from whoſe fountains he had derived that ſoft, copious, and harmonious ſtyle, for which he is ſo juſtly admired.

But to return to the nobler and more important productions of the Muſes. Thus far Poetry muſt be allowed to ſtand eminent among the other liberal arts; inaſmuch as it refreſhes the mind when it is fatigued, ſooths it when it is agitated, relieves and invigorates it when it is depreſſed; as it elevates the thoughts to the admiration of what is beautiful, what is becoming, what is great and noble: nor is it enough to ſay, that it delivers the precepts of virtue in the moſt agreeable manner; it inſinuates or inſtils into the ſoul the very principles of morality itſelf. Moreover, ſince the deſire of glory, innate in man, appears to be the moſt powerful incentive to great and heroic actions, it is the peculiar function of Poetry to improve this bias of our nature, and thus to cheriſh and enliven the embers of virtue: and ſince one of the principal employments of Poetry conſiſts in

the celebration of great and virtuous actions, in tranſmitting to poſterity the examples of the braveſt and moſt excellent men, and in conſecrating their names to immortality; this praiſe is certainly its due, that while it forms the mind to habits of rectitude by its precepts, directs it by examples, excites and animates it by its peculiar force, it has alſo the diſtinguiſhed honour of diſtributing to virtue the moſt ample and deſirable rewards of its labours.

But after all, we ſhall think more humbly of Poetry than it deſerves, unleſs we direct our attention to that quarter, where its importance is moſt eminently conſpicuous; unleſs we contemplate it as employed on ſacred ſubjects, and in ſubſervience to Religion. This indeed appears to have been the original office and deſtination of Poetry; and this it ſtill ſo happily performs, that in all other caſes it ſeems out of character, as if intended for this purpoſe alone. In other inſtances Poetry appears to want the aſſiſtance of art, but in this to ſhine forth with all its natural ſplendour, or rather to be animated by that inſpiration, which on other occaſions is ſpoken of without being felt. Theſe obſer-

vations are remarkably exemplified in the Hebrew Poetry, than which the human mind can conceive nothing more elevated, more beautiful, or more elegant; in which the almoſt ineffable ſublimity of the ſubject is fully equalled by the energy of the language, and the dignity of the ſtyle. And it is worthy obſervation, that as ſome of theſe writings exceed in antiquity the fabulous ages of Greece, in ſublimity they are ſuperior to the moſt finiſhed productions of that poliſhed people. Thus if the actual origin of Poetry be inquired after, it muſt of neceſſity be referred to Religion; and ſince it appears to be an art derived from nature alone, peculiar to no age or nation, and only at an advanced period of ſociety conformed to rule and method, it muſt be wholly attributed to the more violent affections of the heart, the nature of which is to expreſs themſelves in an animated and lofty tone, with a vehemence of expreſſion far remote from vulgar uſe. It is alſo no leſs obſervable, that theſe affections break and interrupt the enunciation by their impetuoſity; they burſt forth in ſentences pointed, earneſt, rapid, and tremulous; and in ſome degree the ſtyle as well as the modulation

dulation is adapted to the emotions and habits of the mind. This is particularly the caſe in admiration and delight; and what paſſions are ſo likely to be excited by religious contemplations as theſe? What ideas could ſo powerfully affect a new-created mind (undepraved by habit or opinion) as the goodneſs, the wiſdom, and the greatneſs of the Almighty? Is it not probable, that the firſt effort of rude and unpoliſhed verſe would diſplay itſelf in the praiſe of the Creator, and flow almoſt involuntarily from the enraptured mind? Thus far at leaſt is certain, that Poetry has been nurtured in thoſe ſacred places, where ſhe ſeems to have been firſt called into exiſtence; and that her original occupation was in the temple and at the altar. However ages and nations may have differed in their religious ſentiments and opinions, in this at leaſt we find them all agreed, that the myſteries of their devotion were celebrated in verſe [16]. Of this origin Poetry even yet exhibits

[16] The moſt antient poetry, as well as muſic, according to Plato, was "that which was addreſſed to the Deity, "under the appellation of Hymns." *De Leg.* Lib. III. SUETONIUS has illuſtrated this ſubject in a very elegant manner, though he is a little unfortunate in his etymology,

exhibits no obſcure indications, ſince ſhe ever embraces a divine and ſacred ſubject with a kind of filial tenderneſs and affection. To the ſacred haunts of Religion ſhe delights to reſort as to her native ſoil; there ſhe moſt willingly inhabits, and there ſhe flouriſhes in all her priſtine beauty and vigour. But to have ſlightly glanced at the ſubject, appears ſufficient for the preſent; we ſhall ſoon

logy, a circumſtance not uncommon with the old Grammarians. "When firſt," ſays he, "mankind emerged "from a ſtate of barbariſm into the habits of civilized "life, and began to be acquainted in ſome meaſure with "their own nature and that of the Gods, they contented "themſelves with a moderate ſtyle of living, and a lan- "guage juſt proportioned to their wants; whatever was "grand or magnificent in either, they dedicated to their "Deities. As, therefore, they built temples more ele- "gant by far than their own habitations, and made the "ſhrines and images of their Divinities much larger than "the human form; ſo they thought it neceſſary to cele- "brate them in a ſtyle of greater majeſty than common; "in language more ſplendid, harmonious, and agreeable. "This ſpecies of compoſition, becauſe it aſſumed a cer- "tain diſtinct form, was called a *Poem*, from the word "ποιειν, and thoſe who cultivated it were called *Poets*." From a fragment of a work not extant, concerning Poetry, quoted by ISIODORUS. *Orig.* Lib. VIII. c. 7.

Author's Note.

perhaps find an opportunity of entering upon a more ample diſcuſſion.

I truſt, indeed, that you will pardon me, Gentlemen, if I do not as yet venture to explain my future plan of inſtruction, and the form and method which I think of purſuing. That man muſt have too little reſpect for your judgment, and by far too high an opinion of his own, who would preſume to produce before you matter not ſufficiently digeſted, not ſufficiently poliſhed and perfected by ſtudy and by the matureſt conſideration. I have therefore determined within myſelf, that nothing ſhall haſtily or prematurely proceed from me in this aſſembly, nothing which is not laboured to the extent of my abilities; and that for what is wanting in genius, in erudition, in fluency, and in every reſpect in which I feel myſelf deficient, I ſhall endeavour to compenſate, as much as poſſible, by care and aſſiduity. If in theſe points I ſhall be enabled to perform my duty, I truſt, Gentlemen, that other deficiencies you will be kind enough to excuſe; and that the perſon whom you have honoured with your favour and attention; with your candour and indulgence, you will continue to ſupport.

LEC-

LECTURE II.

THE DESIGN AND ARRANGEMENT OF THESE LECTURES.

The dignity of the ſubject, and its ſuitableneſs to the deſign of the inſtitution—That Poetry which proceeds from divine inſpiration is not beyond the province of criticiſm—Criticiſm will enable us to account for the origin of the art, as well as to form a juſt eſtimation of its dignity; that the opinion of the divine origin of Poetry was common in Greece—This work purely critical: and conſequently theological diſquiſitions will be avoided—The general diſtribution of the ſubject into three parts, the nature of the verſe, the ſtyle, and the arrangement.

SOCRATES, as we read in Plato [1], having been frequently admoniſhed in a dream to apply to muſic; and eſteeming himſelf bound to fulfil a duty, which appeared to have been impoſed upon him by divine authority, began with compoſing a hymn to Apollo, and afterwards undertook to tranſlate ſome of the fables of Æſop into verſe. This he did, I apprehend, under the perſuaſion, that the firſt-fruits of his poetry (which he eſteemed the principal branch of

[1] In *Phæd.* ſub init.

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the ſcience of muſic [2]) ought to be conſecrated to the immortal Gods; and that it was not lawful for him, who was but little verſed in thoſe ſtudies, to deſcend to lighter ſubjects, which perhaps might in the main be more agreeable to his genius, before he had diſcharged the obligations of religion. It is my intention, Gentlemen, to follow the example of this great philoſopher; and ſince the Univerſity has honoured me with this office of explaining to you the nature and principles of Poetry, I mean to enter upon it from that quarter, whence he thought himſelf obliged to commence the ſtudy and practice of the art. I have determined, therefore, in the firſt place, to treat of Sacred Poetry, that ſpecies, I mean, which was cultivated by the ancient Hebrews, and which is peculiarly appropriated to ſubjects the moſt ſolemn and ſublime; that ſhould my endeavours prove unequal to ſo great a ſubject, I may, as it were, with favourable auſpices, deſcend to matters of inferior importance.

[2] "What then is education?—As far as reſpects the "body it conſiſts in the gymnaſtic exerciſes; as far as "reſpects the mind, it conſiſts in harmony." PLATO *de Rep.* Lib. II. *Author's Note.*

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I undertake this office, however, with the moſt perfect conviction, that not only from a regard to duty it ought to be executed with diligence; but from the reſpectability of that body, at whoſe command it is undertaken, it ought to be executed with honour and reputation; nor is it merely to be conſidered what the intent of the inſtitution and the improvement of the ſtudents may require, but what will be conſiſtent with the dignity of this Univerſity. For ſince the Univerſity, when it gave its ſanction to this ſpecies of diſcipline by a ſpecial decree, recommended the ſtudy of Poetry, particularly becauſe it might conduce to the improvement of the more important ſciences, as well ſacred as profane [3], nothing could certainly appear more uſeful in itſelf, or more agreeable to the purpoſe of this inſtitution, and the deſign of its learned patrons, than to treat of that ſpecies of Poetry, which conſtitutes ſo conſiderable a part of ſacred literature, and excels all other Poetry, not leſs in the ſublimity of the ſtyle than in the dignity of the ſubject.

[3] See the Statute relating to the Poetic Lecture.

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It would not be eaſy, indeed, to aſſign a reaſon, why the writings of Homer, of Pindar, and of Horace, ſhould engroſs our attention and monopolize our praiſe, while thoſe of Moſes, of David and Iſaiah paſs totally unregarded. Shall we ſuppoſe that the ſubject is not adapted to a ſeminary, in which ſacred literature has ever maintained a precedence? Shall we ſay, that it is foreign to this aſſembly of promiſing youth, of whom the greater part have conſecrated the beſt portion of their time and labour to the ſame department of learning? Or muſt we conclude, that the writings of thoſe men, who have accompliſhed only as much as human genius and ability could accompliſh, ſhould be reduced to method and theory; but that thoſe which boaſt a much higher origin, and are juſtly attributed to the inſpiration of the Holy Spirit, may be conſidered as indeed illuſtrious by their native force and beauty, but not as conformable to the principles of ſcience, nor to be circumſcribed by any rules of art? It is indeed moſt true, that ſacred Poetry, if we contemplate its origin alone, is far ſuperior to both *nature* and *art*; but if we would rightly eſtimate its excellencies,

cies, that is, if we wiſh to underſtand its power in exciting the human affections, we muſt have recourſe to both: for we muſt conſider what thoſe affections are, and by what means they are to be excited. Moreover, as in all other branches of ſcience, ſo in Poetry, art or theory conſiſts in a certain knowledge derived from the careful obſervation of nature, and confirmed by practice and experience; for men of learning having remarked in things what was graceful, what was fit, what was conducive to the attainment of certain ends, they digeſted ſuch diſcoveries as had been caſually made, and reduced them to an eſtabliſhed order or method: whence it is evident, that art deduces its origin from the works of genius, not that genius has been formed or directed by art; and that it is properly applied in illuſtrating the works of even thoſe writers, who were either ignorant of its rules, or inattentive to them. Since then it is the purpoſe of ſacred Poetry to form the human mind to the conſtant habit of true virtue and piety, and to excite the more ardent affections of the ſoul, in order to direct them to their proper end; whoever has a clear inſight into the inſtruments,

ments, the machinery as it were, by which this end is effected, will certainly contribute not a little to the improvement of the critical art. Now although it be ſcarcely poſſible to penetrate to the fountains of this celeſtial Nile, yet it may ſurely be allowed us to purſue the meanders of the ſtream, to mark the flux and reflux of its waters, and even to conduct a few rivulets into the adjacent plains.

The ſacred Poetry is undoubtedly entitled to the firſt rank in this ſchool, ſince from it we are to learn both the origin of the art, and how to eſtimate its excellence. The commencement of other arts, however rude and imperfect, and though employed only on light and trivial matters, is an inquiry generally productive of ſatisfaction and delight. Here we may contemplate Poetry in its very beginning; not ſo much the offspring of human genius, as an emanation from heaven; not gradually increaſing by ſmall acceſſions, but from its birth poſſeſſing a certain maturity both of beauty and ſtrength; [4] not adminiſtering to trifling paſſions, and offering

[4] Our author either affects the orator too much in this paſſage, or too careleſsly follows thoſe Jews and Chriſtians, who

offering its delicious incenſe at the ſhrine of vanity, but the Prieſteſs of divine truth, the Internunciate between earth and heaven. For this was the firſt and peculiar office of Poetry, on the one hand to commend to the Almighty the prayers and thankſgivings of his

who attribute all the Hebrew writings to the finger of God himſelf. He ſeems to forget, that, before the rites of Moſes, the Moabites celebrated the victories of their King in a very elegant poem, which Moſes himſelf has preſerved, and that there were other hiſtorical poems, even more ancient than the prophetic bleſſing of Jacob. To theſe our author ſeems not ſufficiently to have attended in this place, though he has made ſome very juſt remarks on this ſubject in a ſucceeding lecture. I am of opinion, indeed, that the Hebrew Poetry originated in the choirs of dancers (not always, however, of a religious kind) when the geſtures of the dancer accorded with the muſic. To this I think the frequent parallelíſms of the verſes may be referred, of which no man has treated more ſatisfactorily than our author, Lect. 19. If indeed Moſes was not the inſtitutor of a practice totally new to the Hebrews, I mean the accommodation of Poetry to muſic and dancing, it follows that Poetry exiſted long before his time, ruſtic and uncultivated at firſt, no doubt, but afterwards more perfect and refined. Nor is it probable, that the firſt eſſays in Poetry were made in the time of Moſes, which may be called the golden age of the Hebrew language, and in which we meet with Poetry too perfect to have been produced in the infancy of the art. M.

creatures, and to celebrate his praiſes;—and on the other, to diſplay to mankind the myſteries of the divine will, and the predictions of future events: the beſt and nobleſt of all employments. It is to this obſervation, indeed, that I would particularly point your attention; for it is plain from the general tenour of the ſacred volume, that the indications of future events have been, almoſt without exception, revealed in numbers and in verſe; and that the ſame ſpirit was accuſtomed to impart, by its own energy, at once the preſentiment of things, and to cloath it in all the magnificence, in all the elegance of Poetry, that the ſublimity of the ſtyle might conſiſt with ſentiments ſo infinitely ſurpaſſing all human conception. When conſidered, therefore, in this point of view, what is there of all which the moſt devoted admirers of Poetry have ever written or fabricated in its commendation, that does not fall greatly ſhort of the truth itſelf? What of all the inſinuations, which its bittereſt adverſaries have objected againſt it, which is not refuted by ſimply contemplating the nature and deſign of the Hebrew Poetry? Let thoſe who affect to deſpiſe the Muſes ceaſe to attempt,

attempt, for the vices of a few, who may abuſe the beſt of things, to bring into diſrepute a moſt laudable talent. Let them ceaſe to ſpeak of that art as light or trifling in itſelf, to accuſe it as profane or impious; that art, which has been conceded to man by the favour of his Creator, and for the moſt ſacred purpoſes; that art, conſecrated by the authority of God himſelf, and by his example in his moſt auguſt miniſtrations.

Whether the Greeks originally derived their poetry from the fountains of nature, or received it through a different channel from a remoter ſource, appears a queſtion of little importance, and not eaſy to be determined. Thus far, however, is evident, that an opinion was prevalent in Greece concerning the nature and origin of poetry, which appears moſt groundleſs and abſurd, if we contemplate only the poetry of Greece, though truly and juſtly applicable to that of the Hebrews. They conſidered Poetry as ſomething ſacred and celeſtial, not produced by human art or genius, but altogether a divine gift. Among them, therefore, poets were accounted ſacred, the ambaſſadors of heaven, men favoured with an immediate intercourſe and familiarity

with the Gods. The myſteries and ceremonies of their religion, and the worſhip of their deities, were all performed in verſe; and the moſt ancient of their compoſitions, their oracles, always conſiſted of numbers. This circumſtance I muſt add rendered them not only more ſublime, but more deſerving of credit in the eyes of the common people; for they conceived it equally the effect of divine inſpiration to foreſee events, and to expreſs them in extemporaneous verſe. Thus they ſeem to have retained ſome traces of an opinion impreſſed upon the minds of men in the very earlieſt ages concerning the true and ancient poetry, even after they had loſt the reality itſelf, and when religion and poetry had by the licentiouſneſs of fiction reciprocally corrupted each other.

Since, therefore, in the ſacred writings the only ſpecimens of the primeval and genuine poetry are to be found, and ſince theſe are not leſs venerable for their antiquity than for their divine original, I conceived it my duty in the firſt place to inveſtigate the nature of theſe writings, as far as might be conſiſtent with the deſign of this inſtitution: in other words, it is not my intention to expound to

the ſtudent of theology the oracles of divine truth; but to recommend to the notice of the youth who is addicted to the politer ſciences, and ſtudious of the elegancies of compoſition, ſome of the firſt and choiceſt ſpecimens of poetic taſte. The difficulty of the undertaking ought probably to have diſcouraged me from the attempt; yet with you, Gentlemen, I truſt my temerity will find this excuſe, namely, that I have undertaken a ſubject the moſt noble in itſelf, and the beſt adapted to the circumſtances of my office. I truſt that you will allow me at leaſt the merit of diſtinguiſhing what was moſt worthy of this place and this aſſembly; though perhaps I have too raſhly engaged, without a due conſideration of my own abilities.

In this diſquiſition it is my intention to purſue that track which the nature of the ſubject ſeems to require. Three points are to be conſidered in every poem: Firſt, the argument or matter, and the manner of treating it; what diſpoſition, what order, and what general form is adapted to each ſpecies of compoſition: Secondly, the elocution and ſtyle; in which are comprehended lively and

elevated ſentiments, ſplendour and perſpicuity of arrangement, beauty and variety of imagery, and ſtrength and elegance of diction: Laſtly, the harmony of the verſe or numbers is to be conſidered, not only as intended to captivate the ear, but as adapted to the ſubject, and expreſſive of it, and as calculated to excite correſponding emotions in the ſoul. We ſhall now conſider what is to be performed in each of theſe departments, and how far we may with ſafety, and with any proſpect of advantage, engage in a critical examination of the Hebrew Poetry.

With reſpect to the nature of the verſification (if I may be allowed to reverſe my own arrangement, and to ſpeak of that firſt, which conſtituted the laſt diviſion of my ſubject) I fear that little can be produced to your ſatisfaction or my own; ſince it is manifeſt not only from the unſucceſsful endeavours of the moſt learned men, but from the nature of the thing itſelf, that ſcarcely any real knowledge of the Hebrew verſification is now to be attained: and the only merit to which any modern writer can lay claim, is that of diſtinguiſhing certain facts (if any there

there be) from uncertain conjecture, and demonſtrating how imperfect our information muſt of neceſſity be upon this topic. Were the inquiry, however, concerning the Hebrew metre to be wholly overlooked; yet ſince ſome veſtiges of verſe are diſcernible, a few obſervations of a general nature will probably occur, which we ſhall in the firſt place ſlightly advert to, and afterwards, as occaſion ſerves, particularize and explain.

That part of theſe Lectures, on the other hand, which treats of the ſtyle of the Hebrew Poetry, will afford very ample ſcope for diſquiſition; ſince it poſſeſſes not only all the principal excellencies which are common to Poetry, but poſſeſſes many alſo which are proper and peculiar to itſelf.

In the remaining part, which though firſt in order and dignity, will be the laſt to be treated of, we muſt with diligence, (as conſidering the difficulty of the ſubject) and at the ſame time with caution engage; leſt while we wander too much at large in the ample field of Poetry, we ſhould imprudently break in upon the ſacred boundaries of Theology. It will be our buſineſs on this occaſion to

diſtribute the Hebrew poems, according to their different ſpecies, into different claſſes; to conſider in each what is moſt worthy of attention; and perhaps to compare them with thoſe of Greece and Rome, if there be any extant of the ſame kind.

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FIRST PART.

OF THE HEBREW METRE.

LECTURE III.

THE HEBREW POETRY IS METRICAL,

The neceſſity of inquiring into the nature of the Hebrew verſe—The Hebrew poetry proved to be metrical from the alphabetical poems, and from the equality and correſpondence of the ſentiments; alſo from the poetical diction—Some of the moſt obvious properties of the verſe—The rhythm and mode of ſcanning totally loſt: proved from facts—The poetical conformation of the ſentences—The Greek and Latin poetry materially different from the Hebrew, from the very nature of the languages—Hence a peculiar property in the proſe verſions of the Hebrew poetry, and the attempts to exhibit this poetry in the verſe of other languages.

ON the very firſt attempt to elucidate the nature of the ſacred poetry, a queſtion preſents itſelf uncommonly difficult and obſcure, concerning the nature of the Hebrew verſe. This queſtion I would indeed gladly have avoided, could I have aban-

doned it conſiſtently with my deſign. But ſince it appears eſſential to every ſpecies of poetry, that it be confined to numbers, and conſiſt of ſome kind of verſe, (for indeed wanting this, it would not only want its moſt agreeable attributes, but would ſcarcely deſerve the name of poetry) in treating of the Poetry of the Hebrews, it appears abſolutely neceſſary to demonſtrate, that thoſe parts at leaſt of the Hebrew writings which we term poetic, are in a metrical form, and to inquire whether any thing be certainly known concerning the nature and principles of this verſification or not. This part of my ſubject therefore I undertake, not as hoping to illuſtrate it by any new obſervations, but merely with a view of inquiring whether it will admit of any illuſtration at all. Even this I ſhall attempt with brevity and caution, as embarked upon an ocean diſhonoured by the ſhipwreck of many eminent perſons, and therefore preſuming only to coaſt along the ſhore.

In the firſt place (notwithſtanding that a contrary opinion has been ſupported by ſome of the learned) I think it will be ſufficiently apparent, if we but advert to them a little more

more attentively, that certain of the Hebrew writings are not only animated with the true poetic ſpirit, but in ſome degree confined to numbers. For there appear in almoſt every part of them ſuch marks and veſtiges of verſe, as would ſcarcely be expected to remain in any language, after the ſound and pronunciation (as is the caſe with the Hebrew at preſent) were, through extreme antiquity, become almoſt totally obſolete.

There exiſted a certain kind of poetry among the Hebrews, principally intended, it ſhould ſeem, for the aſſiſtance of the memory, in which, when there was little connexion between the ſentiments, a ſort of order or method was preſerved, by the initial letters of each line or ſtanza following the order of the alphabet. Of this there are ſeveral examples extant among the ſacred poems [1]; and in theſe examples the verſes are ſo exactly marked and defined, that it is impoſſible to miſtake them for proſe; and particularly if we attentively conſider the verſes, and compare them with one another, ſince they

[1] PSAL. xxv, xxxiv, xxxvii, cxi, cxii, cxix, cxlv. PROV. xxxi. from the 10th verſe to the end. The whole of the Lamentations of Jeremiah except the laſt chapter.

Auth.'s Note.

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are in general ſo regularly accommodated, that word anſwers to word, and almoſt ſyllable to ſyllable. This being the caſe; though an appeal can ſcarcely be made to the ear on this occaſion, the eye itſelf will diſtinguiſh the poetic diviſion and arrangement, and alſo that ſome labour and accuracy has been employed in adapting the words to the meaſure.

The Hebrew poetry has likewiſe another property altogether peculiar to metrical compoſition. Writers who are confined within the trammels of verſe, are generally indulged with the licence of uſing words in a ſenſe and manner remote from their common acceptation, and in ſome degree contrary to the analogy of the language; ſo that ſometimes they ſhorten them by taking from the number of the ſyllables, and ſometimes venture to add a ſyllable for the ſake of adapting them to their immediate purpoſe. This practice is not only effectual to the facilitating of the verſification, but alſo to the prevention of ſatiety by varying the ſounds, and by imparting to the ſtyle a certain peculiar colouring, which elevates it above the language of the vulgar. Poetry therefore always makes uſe of ſome ſuch artifice, as

accords

accords beſt with the genius of each language. This is exemplified particularly in two reſpects: Firſt, in the uſe of gloſſes or foreign language; and ſecondly, in that of certain irregular or leſs received forms of common words[2]. The extreme liberty which the Greeks allowed themſelves in theſe reſpects is remarkable; and their language, beyond every other, becauſe of the variety and copiouſneſs of the different dialects, which prevailed in the ſeveral ſtates of Greece, was peculiarly favourable to it. Next to them none perhaps have admitted theſe liberties more freely than the Hebrews, who not only by the uſe of gloſſes, but by that of anomalous language, and chiefly of certain particles[3] peculiar

[2] See ARISTOT. Poet. c. 22.

[3] The poetical particles, which the Grammarians in general call Paragogic, (or redundant) are as follow. ו added to nouns: NUMB. xxiv. 3. PSAL. l. 10. lxxix. 2. cxiv. 8. civ. 11, 20. ISAI. lvi. 9. (it occurs here twice). ZEPH. ii. 14.

" בנו NUMB. xxiv. 3. as alſo היתו, PSAL. l. 10, &c. " ſeems to be a pleonaſmus peculiar to the Syriac. For " thus it is common for that people to expreſs themſelves " ברה דדוד. The Son of *his* David, MATT. i. 1. דמריא " פומה. The countenance of *his* Lord, ISAI. i. 20. למענו.

" PSAL.

culiar to metrical compoſition, and added frequently at the end of words, have ſo varied their

" PSAL. cxiv. 8. It was formerly read למעין, as appears " from the SEPTUAGINT, λιμνας ὑδατων." H.

י Added to nouns, adverbs, prepoſitions, is common in the poets: alſo to the participles, Benoni, ſing. maſc. & fem. GEN. xlix. 11. PSAL. ci. 5. PROV. xxiii. 16. JER. xxii. 23. xlix. 16. li. 13. EZEK. xxvii. 3. This, however, the Maſorites have ſometimes raſhly expunged.

Concerning the י, when added to verbs in the ſecond perſ. fem. ſing. pret. I have ſometimes my doubts whether it be an error or not. Certainly the Maſorites are of opinion that it ſhould always be expunged. See JER. xiii. 21. xxii. 23. xxxi. 21. and EZEK. xvi. where it occurs eleven times. Now it is not in the leaſt probable that in one chapter the ſame error ſhould ſo frequently take place. " But in theſe eleven places many MSS. confirm the Ma- " ſoretic Keri*, for the י is wanting," K. It may alſo be a Syriac gloſs, which is the opinion of CAPPELL; *Crit. Sac.* Lib. iii. c. xiii. 8. Though there is a paſſage, where it occurs in the ſame perſon maſc. כי אמרתי, " be- " cauſe thou haſt ſaid," PSAL. lxxxix. 3. So indeed almoſt all the old interpreters, except the Chaldean paraphraſt, have taken it; and rightly, indeed, if regard is to be paid to the context or the parallelism of the ſentences. But this I rather eſteem an error, though the Maſorites have not noted it as ſuch.

" Verbs in which the י is added to the ſecond perſ. fem. " ſing. pret. follow the Syriac and Arabic form." H.

* A Maſoretic term for a various reading.

their ſtyle, as to form to themſelves a diſtinct poetical dialect. Thus far, therefore, I think we

for ם, or הם, occurs frequently in the Hebrew poetry. See PSAL. ii. 3, 4, 5. where it appears five times: ſometimes in the ſingular for ו; ſee ISAI. xliv. 15. liii. 8. JOB xx. 23. xxii. 2. xxvii. 23. PSAL. xi. 7. It is very often merely paragogic, or redundant. כמו ſimply ſeems to be altogether poetical; it occurs in NEHEM. ix. 11. and is taken from the Song of Moſes, EXOD. xv. 5.—It is, however, not the ſame with præfixes or ſuffixes.

"ISAI. liii. 8. למו. The SEPTUAGINT in this place is "ἠχθη εἰς θανατον (he was led unto death): in this it follows "the Arabic verſion, which reads למות." H.

Of theſe particles, which I call poetical, there occur very few examples in the proſe parts of Scripture, indeed I do not know that there are any more than the following: ו, GEN. i. 24. but inſtead of חיתו ארץ, the SAMARITAN copy has חית הארץ, as it is alſo expreſſed in the Hebrew in the following verſe. י, GEN. xxxi. 39. twice: but it is alſo wanting in the Samaritan copy: although it may poſſibly be meant for a pronominal affix. Alſo in RUTH iii. 3, 4. three times; iv. 5. and in 2 KINGS iv. 23. "But in "all theſe places, many MSS. confirm the Maſoretic Keri; "for י is wanting." K. Laſtly, מו, EXOD. xxiii. 31. but inſtead of גרשתמו, the SEPTUAGINT and the VULGATE read גרשתים, and the context favours this reading.

Hitherto perhaps might be referred the ד and ן paragogic, and the relative ש, which occur more frequently in the poets than elſewhere.

Theſe are moſt, if not all of them, examples of anomalies, which ſerve to diſtinguiſh particularly the Poetic Dialect

we may with safety affirm, that the Hebrew poetry is metrical. One or two of the peculiarities

Dialect. To demonstrate more fully, how freely they are made use of by the sacred Poets, I shall annex a specimen, which Abarbanel exhibits as collected from our short poem, namely, the Song of Moses. "You may observe," says he, "in this poem, words sometimes contracted for "the sake of the measure, and sometimes lengthened "and extended by additional letters and syllables, ac-"cording as the simple terms may be redundant or de-"ficient. The letters which in this canticle are super-"added, are as follow: the vau and jod twice in the "word יכסיומו, for in reality כסם would have been quite "sufficient: the jod is also added in נאדרי; the vau in "יאכלמו; the vau in תורישמו: the vau also in יכסמו, in "תבלעמו; in אחזמו: the thau in אימתה." (In truth this form of nouns appears to be altogether Poetical; many examples of which may be found in GLASS. *Phil. Sac.* p. 269. all of them, however, from the Poetic and Prophetic books.) "The vau in תביאמו; in תטעמו. The "deficient are jod in וזמרת יח; so in תמלאמו for תמלא מהם: "The vau in נחלת for נחלתו; so also the word לבב is de-"ficient in the verse נמוגו כל ישבי כנען; for the Prince of "the Prophets cannot be suspected of erring in gram-"matical or orthographical accuracy; but the necessity "of the verse and a proper regard to harmony so required "it." ABARB. *in Mantissa Dissert. ad Libr.* COSRI. a BUXTORFIO, edit *Basil*, 1660, p. 412. To these examples one might add from the same canticle מו twice in כמו, נ Epithentic in ארממנהו, Paragogic in ירגזון.

Concerning

liarities alſo of their verſification it may be proper to remark, which as they are very obſervable

Concerning the Gloſſes or foreign words, which occur in the Hebrew Poetry; in the preſent ſtate of the Hebrew language, it is difficult to pronounce on the ruins, as it were, of neighbouring and contemporary dialects: ſince poſſibly thoſe words which are commonly taken for Chaldaic (for inſtance) might have been common to both languages; on the contrary, ſome of thoſe, which more rarely occur, and the etymology of which we are ignorant about, may have been borrowed from the neighbouring dialects. Since, however, there are ſome words which more frequently occur in the poetical remains, and which are not elſewhere to be found but in the Chaldee; we may rationally conjecture concerning theſe, that they have been introduced into the Hebrew, or at leaſt, after becoming obſolete in common language, might be again made uſe of: ſuch are the following, *Bar* (a ſon) *Koſhet* (truth) *Sega* (he increaſed) *Shebach* (he praiſed) *Zakaph* (he lifted up) *Gnuck* (in the Hebrew *Tzick*), he preſſed, &c. Obſerve Moſes, however, in the exordium of his laſt benediction, DEUT. xxxiii. has he not alſo frequently admitted of Chaldaiſms? What is אחה? which again occurs, ver. 21. What is חבב? in both form and ſenſe Chaldaic. What דת? a word ſcarcely received into common uſe among the Hebrews till after the Babyloniſh captivity; eſpecially ſince the Hebrew abounded in ſynonymous terms, expreſſive of the *Law of God*. (But perhaps this laſt word in this place is rightly ſuſpected to be an error. See KENNICOTT, *Diſſert. I. of the Hebrew Text*, p. 427. and HOUBIGANT in loc.) Iſaiah, however, elegantly adopts the Chaldaic form, ſpeaking

ſervable in thoſe poems, in which the verſes are defined by the initial letters, may at leaſt be reaſonably conjectured of the reſt. The firſt of theſe is, that the verſes are very unequal in length; the ſhorteſt conſiſting of ſix or ſeven ſyllables; the longeſt extending to about twice that number: the ſame poem is, however, generally continued throughout in verſes

ing of Babylon, in the word מדהבה, which in the Hebrew would be מזהבה, chap. xiv. 4. Nor leſs appoſitely on the ſame ſubject does the Pſalmiſt introduce the word תוללינו, PSAL. cxxxvii. 3. which is the Chaldaic for שבלינו, as the Chaldean paraphraſt himſelf allows, who renders it by the ſynonymous term בזנא, as elſewhere he renders the word שלל; (ſee EZEK. xxvi. 12. xxix. 19. xxxviii. 12, 13.) nor indeed do the other interpreters produce any thing to the purpoſe. Some inſtances of grammatical anomalies in the Gloſſes have been detected; ſuch are the following, Syriac or Chaldaic: מ for ך, PSAL. cxvi. thrice; ciii. five times; alſo in JER. xi. 15. מי for י, PSAL. cxvi. 12. ין as a termination plur. nom. maſc. for ים, JOB iv. 2. xxiv. 22. xxxi. 10. and frequently elſewhere; alſo PROV. xxxi. 3. LAM. iv. 3. EZEK. xxvi. 18. MIC. iii. 12.

" אחה, the SAMARITAN has אזו, in the Arabic form. " חבב, מדהבה, are Chaldaic as well as Arabic. תוללינו, " but this word ſeems to have followed the etymology of " the Arabic verb תלל, *he bound, he led captive*; whence " the Septuagint αιχμαλωτους ημας; and the Chaldaic בזנא, " *he carried away captive.*" H. *Author's Note.*

not

not very unequal to each other. I muſt alſo obſerve, that the cloſe of the verſe generally falls where the members of the ſentences are divided *.

As to the real quantity, the rythm, or modulation, theſe from the preſent ſtate of the language ſeem to be altogether unknown, and even to admit of no inveſtigation by human art or induſtry. It is indeed evident, that the true Hebrew pronunciation is totally loſt. The rules concerning it, which were deviſed by the modern Jews many ages after the language of their anceſtors had fallen into diſuſe, have been long ſince ſuſpected by the learned to be deſtitute of authority and truth: for if in reality the Hebrew language is to be conformed to the poſitions of theſe men, we muſt be under the neceſſity of confeſſing, not only, what we at preſent experience, that the Hebrew poetry poſſeſſes no remains of ſweetneſs or harmony, but that it never was poſſeſſed of any. The truth is, it was neither poſſible for them to recal the true

* This mode of verſification is not altogether foreign to our own language, as is evident from ſome of our earlieſt writers, particularly PIERS PLOWMAN. S. H.

pronunciation of a language long ſince obſolete, and to inſtitute afreſh the rules of orthoepy; nor can any perſon in the preſent age ſo much as hope to effect any thing to the purpoſe by the aid of conjecture, in a matter ſo remote from our ſenſes, and ſo involved in obſcurity. In this reſpect, indeed, the delicacy of all languages is moſt remarkable. After they ceaſe to be ſpoken, they are ſtill ſignificant of ſome ſound; but that in the mouth of a ſtranger becomes moſt diſſonant and barbarous: the vital grace is wanting, the native ſweetneſs is gone, the colour of primeval beauty is faded and decayed. The Greek and Latin doubtleſs have now loſt much of their priſtine and native ſweetneſs; and as they are ſpoken, the pronunciation is different in different nations, but every where barbarous, and ſuch as Attic or Roman ears would not have been able to endure. In theſe, however, the rythm or quantity remains, each retains its peculiar numbers, and the verſification is diſtinct: but the ſtate of the Hebrew is far more unfavourable, which, deſtitute of vowel ſounds, has remained altogether ſilent (if I may uſe the expreſſion) incapable of utterance upwards of

two

two thouſand years. Thus, not ſo much as the number of ſyllables, of which each word conſiſted, could with any certainty be defined, much leſs the length or quantity of the ſyllables: and ſince the regulation of the metre of any language muſt depend upon two particulars, I mean the number and the length of the ſyllables, the knowledge of which is utterly unattainable in the Hebrew, he who attempts to reſtore the true and genuine Hebrew verſification, erects an edifice without a foundation. To ſome of thoſe indeed who have laboured in this matter, thus much of merit is to be allowed; that they rendered the Hebrew poetry, which formerly ſounded uncommonly harſh and barbarous, in ſome degree ſofter, and more poliſhed; they indeed furniſhed it with a ſort of verſification, and metrical arrangement, when baffled in their attempts to diſcover the real. That we are juſtified in attributing to them any thing more than this, is neither apparent from the nature of the thing, nor from the arguments with which they attempt to defend their conjectures[5]. Their endeavours in truth would

[5] See the brief confutation of Biſhop Hare's Hebrew Metres.

rather tend to ſuperſede all inquiry on a ſubject which the moſt learned and ingenious have inveſtigated in vain; and induce us to relinquiſh as loſt, what we ſee cannot be retrieved.

But although nothing certain can be defined concerning the metre of the particular verſes, there is yet another artifice of poetry to be remarked of them when in a collective ſtate, when ſeveral of them are taken together. In the Hebrew poetry, as I before remarked, there may be obſerved a certain conformation of the ſentences, the nature of which is, that a complete ſenſe is almoſt equally infuſed into every component part, and that every member conſtitutes an entire verſe. So that as the poems divide themſelves in a manner ſpontaneouſly into periods, for the moſt part equal; ſo the periods themſelves are divided into verſes, moſt commonly couplets, though frequently of greater length. This is chiefly obſervable in thoſe paſſages, which frequently occur in the Hebrew poetry, in which they treat one ſubject in many different ways, and dwell upon the ſame ſentiment; when they expreſs the ſame thing in different words, or different things in a ſimilar

ſimilar form of words; when equals refer to equals, and oppoſites to oppoſites: and ſince this artifice of compoſition ſeldom fails to produce even in proſe an agreeable and meaſured cadence, we can ſcarcely doubt that it muſt have imparted to their poetry, were we maſters of the verſification, an exquiſite degree of beauty and grace. In this circumſtance, therefore, which is common to moſt of the Hebrew poems, we find, if not a rule and principle, at leaſt a characteriſtic of the ſacred poetry: inſomuch that in that language the word *Mizmor* [6] (or Pſalm) according

[6] *Zamar*, he cut off, he pruned, namely, the ſuperfluous and luxuriant branches of trees. Hence *Zemorah*, a *branch*, or *twig*; *Marmarah*, a pruning-hook. Alſo he ſung, or chanted; he cut his voice by the notes in ſinging, or divided it. *Shur* ſignifies ſinging with the voice (vocal muſic): *Nazan*, to play upon an inſtrument. *Zamar* implies either vocal or inſtrumental melody. Thus *Bineginoth miſmor ſhir* (See PSAL. lxvii. 1.) I think means *a metrical ſong, accompanied with muſic*. Thus I ſuppoſe *miſmor* to denote *meaſure*, or numbers, what the Greeks called ῥυθμὸν (Rythmon). It may alſo be more immediately referred to the former and original ſenſe of the root, as ſignifying, a poem *cut into ſhort ſentences*, and *pruned* from every luxuriancy of expreſſion, which is a diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of the Hebrew poetry. Proſe compoſition is called *Sheluchah*, looſe or free, diffuſed with no reſpect

ing to its etymology, is expreſſive of a compoſition cut or divided, in a peculiar manner, into ſhort and equal ſentences.

The nature of the Greek and Latin poetry is in this reſpect directly oppoſite; and that in conformity to the genius of the different languages. For the Greek, beyond every other language, (and the Latin next to it) is copious, flowing, and harmonious, poſſeſſed of a great variety of meaſures, of which the impreſſion is ſo definite, the effects ſo ſtriking, that if one ſhould recite ſome lame and imperfect portion of a verſe, or even enunciate haſtily ſeveral verſes in a breath, the numbers would nevertheleſs be clearly diſcernible: ſo that in theſe every variety eſſential to poetry and verſe may be provided for almoſt at pleaſure, without the ſmalleſt injury to the different metres. But in the Hebrew language the whole economy is different. Its form is ſimple above every other;

reſpect to rule; like a wild tree, luxuriant on every ſide in its leaves and branches: Metrical language is *Zimrah*, *cut* and *pruned* on every ſide into ſentences, like branches, diſtributed into a certain form and order; as vines, which the vine-dreſſer corrects with his pruning-knife, and adjuſts into form. *Author's Note.*

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the radical words are uniform, and reſemble each other almoſt exactly; nor are the inflexions numerous, or materially different: whence we may readily underſtand, that its metres are neither complex, nor capable of much variety; but rather ſimple, grave, temperate; leſs adapted to fluency than dignity and force: ſo that poſſibly they found it neceſſary to diſtinguiſh the extent of the verſe by the concluſion of the ſentence, leſt the lines, by running into each other, ſhould become altogether implicated and confuſed.

Two obſervations occur in this place worthy of attention, and ariſe naturally from what has been ſaid. The firſt is, that a poem tranſlated literally from the Hebrew into the proſe of any other language, whilſt the ſame forms of the ſentences remain, will ſtill retain, even as far as relates to verſification, much of its native dignity, and a faint appearance of verſification. This is evident in our common verſion of the Scriptures, where frequently

" The order chang'd, and verſe from verſe
" diſjoin'd,
" Yet ſtill the poet's ſcatter'd limbs we find:"

But the caſe is very different in literal tranſlations from the Greek or Latin [7]. The other remark, which I wiſhed to recommend to your notice, is, that a Hebrew poem, if tranſlated into Greek or Latin verſe, and having the conformation of the ſentences accommodated to the idiom of a foreign language, will appear confuſed and mutilated; will ſcarcely retain a trace of its genuine elegance, and peculiar beauty. For in exhibiting the works of great poets in another language, much depends upon preſerving not only the internal meaning, the force and beauty as far as regards the ſenſe, but even the external lineaments, the proper colour and habit, the movement, and, as it

[7] "Nevertheleſs" (that is, though the ſacred poetry be not poſſeſſed of metrical ſyllables, and divided into feet, which is the opinion of this learned man) "we cannot "doubt that it has another ſpecies of metrical arrange-"ment, which depends upon the ſubject.—Is it not evi-"dent, that if you tranſlate ſome of them into another "language, they ſtill retain this metrical form, if not "perfect, at leaſt in a great degree? which cannot poſ-"ſibly take place in thoſe poems, the metre of which "conſiſts in the number and quantity of ſyllables." R. AZARIAS in *Mantiſſ. Diſſert. ad Libr.* COSRI, p. 420. *Author's Note.*

were,

were, the gait of the original. Thoſe, therefore, who have endeavoured to expreſs the beauties of the ſacred poets in Greek or Latin verſe, have unavoidably failed in the attempt to depict them according to their native genius and character; and have exhibited ſomething, whether inferior or not, certainly very unlike them, both in kind and form; whether, on the other hand, they have been able to approach, in ſome degree, their energy, their majeſty and ſpirit, is not our preſent object to conſider.

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SECOND PART.

OF THE PARABOLIC OR POETICAL STYLE OF THE HEBREWS.

LECTURE IV.

THE ORIGIN, USE, AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARABOLIC, AND ALSO OF THE SENTENTIOUS STYLE.

The poetic ſtyle of the Hebrews bears the general title of Parabolic—*Its conſtituent principles are the ſententious, the figurative, and the ſublime—The ſource of the Parabolic ſtyle and its original uſe: among other nations; among the Hebrews—Certain examples of it preſerved from the firſt ages in the writings of Moſes.*—1. *The ſententious kind; its nature and effects.*

THE ſubject which next preſents itſelf to our inveſtigation, is the Style of the Hebrew poetry. The meaning of this word I do not wiſh to be reſtricted to the diction only of the ſacred poets, but rather to include their ſentiment, their mode of thinking; whence, as from its genuine ſource, the peculiar character of their com-

poſition may be deduced. It will be proper, however, before we proceed, to remark, that as it is the nature of all poetry, ſo it is particularly of the Hebrew, to be totally different from common language; and not only in the choice of words, but in the conſtruction, to affect a peculiar and more exquiſite mode of expreſſion. The truth of this remark will appear from what uſually happens to a learner of Hebrew. He, for inſtance, who is a proficient in the hiſtorical books, when he comes to the poetical parts, will find himſelf almoſt a perfect ſtranger. The phraſeology, however, peculiar to the poets, the bold ellipſes, the ſudden tranſitions of the tenſes, genders, and perſons, and other ſimilar circumſtances, I ſhall leave to the Grammarian: or rather I ſhall leave (ſince I do not find, that the Grammarians acknowledge any diſtinction between poetical and common language) to be collected from practice and attentive reading. It would be a no leſs indolent and trifling occupation to poſt through all thoſe forms of tropes and figures, which the teachers of rhetoric have pompouſly (not to ſay uſeleſsly) heaped together; ſince there is no neceſſity of applying

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to the ſacred poetry for examples of theſe, every compoſition, however trite and barren, abounding in them. Of theſe, therefore, we ſhall be ſparing, and uſe them not as freely as we might, but as much only as ſhall appear abſolutely neceſſary. For at preſent we are not ſo much to inquire what are the general principles of poetical compoſition, as what are the peculiar marks and characters of the Hebrew poetry. Let us conſider, therefore, whether the literature of the Hebrews will not ſuggeſt ſome general term, which will give us an opportunity of diſcuſſing the ſubject, ſo as to bring it under one comprehenſive view; and which, being divided according to its conſtituent parts, will preſcribe a proper order and limit to our diſquiſition.

A poem is called in Hebrew *Mizmor*, that is, as was before remarked, a ſhort compoſition cut and divided into diſtinct parts [1]. It is thus called in reference to the verſe and numbers. Again, a poem is called, in reference

[1] "Agreeable to this is the meaning of the Arabic "verb *Zamar*, *collected*, or *tied up*, therefore *rendered* "*ſmaller*, and *contained* within leſs ſpace: It alſo means "*to ſing*, &c." H.

ference to the diction and ſentiments, *Maſhal* [z]; which I take to be the word properly expreſſive

[z] NUMB. xxi. 27. xxiii. and xxiv. frequently. MIC. ii. 4. ISAI. xiv. 4. PSAL. xlix. 5. lxxviii. 2. JOB xxvii. 1. xxix. 1.

Maſhal, he *likened*, he *compared*, he *ſpoke in parables*; *he uttered proverbs, ſentences grave and pointed*, a *compoſition ornamented with figures* and *compariſons*: alſo he *ruled*, he *was eminent*, he *poſſeſſed dominion* and authority; delegated, perhaps, and vicarious in its original and reſtricted ſenſe, whence at laſt it was taken more laxly, as referring to any kind of dominion: The elder ſervant of Abraham, who preſided over his family, was certainly called HAMASHEL *be-bal, aſher lo*, GEN. xxiv. 2. He was in fact a ſteward in the place of his maſter, and repreſenting him by a delegated authority; whence there is evidently a relation between the two interpretations of this root, conſiſting in this circumſtance, that both the parabolical image, and the ſteward or deputy, are repreſentative. *Maſhal* is therefore a compoſition elevated and grave, weighty and powerful, highly ornamented with compariſons, figures, and imagery; ſuch is the ſtyle of the Pſalms, the Prophets, and the Book of Job: it is a diction, which under one image or exemplar includes many, and may eaſily be transferred to every one of the ſame kind; which is in general the nature of proverbs: it is in fine, any ſentence or axiom excellently or gravely uttered, conciſe, and confined to a certain form or manner: as is evident from 1 SAM. xxiv. 14. and from many examples in the Proverbs of Solomon.

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expreſſive of the poetical ſtyle. Many tranſlators render it by the word *Parable*, which in ſome reſpects is not improper, though it ſcarcely comprehends the full compaſs of the Hebrew expreſſion; for if we inveſtigate its full and proper force, we ſhall find that it includes three forms or modes of ſpeech, the ſententious, the figurative, and the ſublime. To theſe as parts or diviſions of the general ſubject may be referred whatever occurs concerning the parabolic or poetical ſtyle of the Hebrews: but the reaſon of this arrangement will perhaps be better underſtood, if

" In Arabic *Mathal* (for ש (ſh) and ת (th) are interchangeable letters) means to *make a likeneſs*, to *expreſs* " *or imitate a reſemblance*, to *dictate a parable or proverb*, " to *give an inſtance*." H.

With *Maſhal*, *chidah* is frequently joined, and means, *a ſaying pointed, exquiſite, obſcure*; ſuch as requires either to the conception or underſtanding of it conſiderable ingenuity. It is derived from *Chud*, to propoſe a *problem*, or *enigma*, or *ſome exquiſite and curious ſaying*; which agrees with *Chedad*, to *ſharpen*, or to *be ſharp*.

" In the Arabic, it ſignifies, *to be bent*; and *Chid*, he " *turned out of his way*: whence SCHULTENS (Comment. " in Job xvi. 20.) deduces the Hebrew word *Chidah*: " as it were an *intricate ſpecies of compoſition*, a *rid-* " *dle*." H. *Author's Note.*

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we premiſe a ſhort inquiry into the origin and early uſe of this ſtyle of compoſition.

The origin and firſt uſe of poetical language are undoubtedly to be traced into the vehement affections of the mind. For what is meant by that ſingular frenzy of poets, which the Greeks, aſcribing to divine inſpiration, diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of *enthuſiaſm*, but a ſtyle and expreſſion directly prompted by nature itſelf, and exhibiting the true and expreſs image of a mind violently agitated? When, as it were, the ſecret avenues, the interior receſſes of the ſoul are thrown open; when the inmoſt conceptions are diſplayed, riſhing together in one turbid ſtream, without order or connexion. Hence ſudden exclamations, frequent interrogations, apoſtrophes even to inanimate objects: for to thoſe, who are violently agitated themſelves, the univerſal nature of things ſeems under a neceſſity of being affected with ſimilar emotions. Every impulſe of the mind, however, has not only a peculiar ſtyle and expreſſion, but a certain tone of voice, and a certain geſture of the body adapted to it: ſome, indeed, not ſatisfied with that expreſſion which language affords, have added to

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it dancing and ſong; and as we know there exiſted in the firſt ages a very ſtrict connexion between theſe arts and that of poetry, we may poſſibly be indebted to them for the accurately admeaſured verſes and feet, to the end that the modulation of the language might accord with the muſic of the voice, and the motion of the body.

Poetry, in this its rude origin and commencement, being derived from nature, was in time improved by art, and applied to the purpoſes of utility and delight. For as it owed its birth to the affections of the mind, and had availed itſelf of the aſſiſtance of harmony, it was found, on account of the exact and vivid delineation of the objects which it deſcribed, to be excellently adapted to the exciting of every internal emotion, and making a more forcible impreſſion upon the mind than abſtract reaſoning could poſſibly effect; it was found capable of intereſting and affecting the ſenſes and paſſions, of captivating the ear, of directing the perception to the minuteſt circumſtances, and of aſſiſting the memory in the retention of them. Whatever therefore deſerved to be generally known and accurately remembered, was (by thoſe men,

men, who on this very account were denominated *wiſe* [3]) adorned with a jocund and captivating

[3] The Bards, or Poets, are enumerated by the SON OF SIRACH, among the wiſe and illuſtrious men of former times:

"Wiſe and eloquent in their inſtructions,
"Such as found out muſical tunes,
"And recited written verſes."

ECCLUS xliv. 4.

Obſerve alſo, whether theſe four, whoſe wiſdom is ſo much celebrated, 1 KINGS iv. 31. *Beni Machol*, be not *Sons of the Choir*; that is, Muſicians or Poets: for they were (not *Sons of Mahol*, as our Tranſlators render it, taking an appellative for a proper name, but) Sons of *Zerach*, as appears from 1 CHRON. ii. 6. "Whence "the eldeſt of them, *Ethan*, was alſo called *Ha-Ezrahi*, "1 KINGS iv. 31. where the Targum expreſsly has it "*Bar Zerach*, Son of *Zerach*." H. Among the Greeks alſo the Poets were anciently called Wiſe Men, or Sophiſts:

"Roſy Venus, Queen of all!
"So the *Wiſe* bright Venus call."

ANACREON.

That is, the Poets.—So alſo Pindar

——— "Sung by the *Wiſe*,
"And honour'd by the will of Jove."

Iſt. V. 36.

Upon which paſſage the Scholiaſt: "The Poets are com-"monly called Wiſe Men, and Sophiſts." "The Poets "preceded

captivating ſtyle, illuminated with the varied and ſplendid colouring of language, and moulded into ſentences comprehenſive, pointed, and harmonious. It became the peculiar province of poetry to depict the great, the beautiful, the becoming, the virtuous; to embelliſh and recommend the precepts of religion and virtue, to tranſmit to poſterity excellent and ſublime actions and ſayings; to celebrate the works of the Deity, his beneficence, his wiſdom; to record the memorials of the paſt, and the predictions of the future. In each of theſe departments Poetry was of ſingular utility, ſince before any characters expreſſive of ſounds were invented, at leaſt before they were commonly received; and applied to general uſe, it ſeems to have afforded the only means of preſerving the rude ſcience of the early times; and in this reſpect, to have rendered the want of letters more tolerable: it ſeems alſo to have acted the part of a public herald, by whoſe voice each memorable tranſaction of antiquity was

" preceded theſe (the Philoſophers) by ſome ages; and " before the name of Philoſopher was known were called " Wiſe Men." LACTANTIUS, Lib. V. 5. *Author's Note.*

proclaimed

proclaimed and tranſmitted through different ages and nations.

Such appears by the teſtimony of authors to have been the undoubted origin of Poetry among heathen nations. It is evident that Greece for ſeveral ſucceſſive ages was poſſeſſed of no records but the poetic: for the firſt who publiſhed a proſe oration was Pherecydes, a man of the iſle of Syrus, and contemporary with King Cyrus, who lived ſome ages poſterior to that of Homer and Heſiod: ſomewhat after that time Cadmus the Mileſian [4] began to compoſe hiſtory. The laws themſelves were metrical, and adapted to certain muſical notes: ſuch were the laws of Charondas, which were ſung at the banquets

[4] STRABO *Geog.* Lib. I. PLIN. *Nat. Hiſt.* Lib. VII. 56. & V. 29. This matter is well explained by Iſidorus, however raſhly ſome learned men may have taken it. "It is well known," ſays he, "that among the Greeks, "as well as among the Latins, metrical compoſition was "much more ancient than proſe. Every ſpecies of know-"ledge was at firſt contained in poetry: it was long "before proſe compoſition flouriſhed. The firſt man "among the Greeks, who compoſed in proſe, was Phere-"cydes Syrius; among the Romans, Appius Cæcus "firſt publiſhed a work in proſe againſt Pyrrhus." ISIDOR. HISPAL. *Orig.* Lib. I. 27. *Author's Note.*

of the Athenians [5]: ſuch were thoſe which were delivered by the Cretans [6] to the ingenuous youth to be learned by rote, with accompaniments of muſical melody, in order that by the enchantment of harmony, the ſentiments might be more forcibly impreſſed upon their memories. Hence certain poems were denominated νομοι (nomoi) which implied convivial or banqueting ſongs, as is remarked by Ariſtotle [7]; who adds, that the ſame cuſtom of chanting the laws to muſic, exiſted even in his own time among the Agathyrſi [8]. If we may credit

[5] "The laws of Charondas were ſung at banquets "among the Athenians, as Hermippus relates." ATHEN. Lib. XIV. 3. See BENTLEY's *Diſſertation* on *Phalaris*, p. 373. *Author's Note.*

[6] ÆLIAN. *Var. Hiſt.* L. II. 39.

[7] "Why are laws called canticles? but that before "alphabetical writing was invented, the laws uſed to be "ſung, that they might be preſerved in remembrance? "as is the cuſtom ſtill among the Agathyrſi." *Prob.* S. 19. Q. 28. *Author's Note.*

[8] Poſſibly laws, which are in the ſententious ſtyle, were originally precepts of equity and morals, and in courſe of time acquired authority in the courts of juſtice. There is much of this proverbial ſtyle in the ancient German laws:

dit Strabo [9], the Turdetani, a people of Spain, had laws in verſe. But the Germans [10], as Tacitus poſitively aſſerts, had no records

laws: and I am aſſured by good authority, in thoſe of Sweden alſo. Moſes himſelf is ſo ſententious and compact, and pays ſo much attention to brevity in many of his laws, that he ſeems to have adopted into his code ſome well-known proverbs, containing the general principles of equity; of this I think there is an inſtance in EXOD. xxiii. 5. in which there is a point and antitheſis, more reſembling the familiarity of a proverb than the dignity of a ſtatute. To the example of the Luſitanians, we may add one more recent of the Swedes, who in the year 1748 publiſhed laws in verſe. M.

[9] *Geog.* Lib. III.

[10] After the extraordinary revolutions of Germany, and the diſperſion of that people into different colonies, it is not ſurprizing that no monuments of the poetical records of our anceſtors ſhould remain. Scandinavia and Iceland have been more fortunate in this reſpect, there the records of their moſt ancient tranſactions are traditionally preſerved to this day. Theſe inſtances of a practice ſo agreeable to that of the Hebrews exiſting among a people ſo remote, ſerve to prove the great ſimilarity in the human mind throughout all the countries of the globe, and ſhew that the moſt natural and early mode of preſerving facts, has been by verſes committed to memory, rather than by written documents. What Pocock relates of the Arabs, applies perhaps more directly to the preſent ſubject. "It ſeems," he ſays, "to be entirely owing to

records or annals but the traditional poems, in which they celebrated the heroic exploits of their anceſtors [11]. In the ſame manner, and

" their poetry, that ſo copious a language is preſerved in " a perfect ſtate. Among other commendations of their " poetry, they enumerate this, that both the purity of the " Arabic language, and the propriety and elegance of their " pronunciation, have owed their preſervation entirely " to it. Ebn Phares obſerves, that the Arabic poems " ſerve in the place of commentaries, or annals, in which " are recorded the ſeries of their genealogies, and all the " facts of hiſtory deſerving of remembrance, and from " which a knowledge of the language is to be col- " lected." M.

However the antiquity of Oſſian's poems, as exhibited to the public, may be doubted, it is certain that there exiſt in the Highlands of Scotland many remains of the ancient hiſtorical ballads, which, though in all probability of a much later date than the age of Oſſian is pretended to be, contain many marks of wild genius, and I am informed from good authority furniſhed Mr. Macpherſon with the bulk of his materials. T.

[11] To theſe teſtimonies concerning the early uſe of poetry, I will add a remarkable paſſage of Plutarch, which ſtates ſummarily many facts relating to this circumſtance. " The uſe of reaſon ſeems to reſemble the exchange of " money: that which is good and lawful is generally " current and well known, and paſſes ſometimes at a " higher and ſometimes at a lower value. Thus, there " was a time when the ſtamp and coin of all reaſoning or " compoſition

and on the ſame account, the Perſians, the Arabs, and many of the moſt ancient of the Eaſtern nations, preſerved in verſe their hiſtory and politics, as well as the principles of religion and morals: Thus all ſcience human and divine was depoſited in the trea-

" compoſition was verſe and ſong. Even hiſtory, phi-
" loſophy, every action and paſſion, which required grave
" or ſerious diſcuſſion, was written in poetry and adapted
" to muſic. For what at preſent few will attend to, was
" then by all men thought an object of importance: *by*
" *ploughmen* and *by bird-catchers*, according to PINDAR.
" For ſuch was the inclination for poetry at that period,
" that they adapted their very precepts and inſtructions to
" vocal and inſtrumental muſic, and exhorted, reproved,
" and perſuaded by fables or allegories. The praiſes alſo
" of their gods, their prayers, and thankſgivings after
" victory, were all compoſed in verſe; ſome through the
" love of harmony, and ſome through cuſtom. It is not
" therefore that Apollo envies the ſcience of divination
" this ornament, nor did he deſign to baniſh from the
" Tripos his beloved Muſe; he rather wiſhed to intro-
" duce her as one who loved harmony and excited to it;
" as one who was ready to aſſiſt the fancy and concep-
" tion, and to help to produce what was noble and ſub-
" lime, as moſt becoming and moſt to be admired."
PLUT. *Inquiry, why the Pythia now ceaſes to deliver her oracles in verſe. Author's Note.*

See this ſubject treated at large, *Eſſays hiſtorical and moral, by* G. GREGORY, Eſſay I. *On the Progreſs of Manners*, P. 31, 37, 39, 40, 43. T.

ſury of the Muſes, and thither it was neceſſary on every occaſion to reſort [12]. The only mode of inſtruction, indeed, adapted to human nature in an uncivilized ſtate, when the knowledge of letters was very little, if at all diffuſed, muſt be that which is calculated to captivate the ear and the paſſions, which aſſiſts the memory, which is not to be delivered into the hand, but infuſed into the mind and heart [13].

That the caſe was the ſame among the Hebrews; that poetry was both anciently and generally known and practiſed by them, appears highly probable, as well from the analogy of things, as from ſome veſtiges of poetic language extant in the writings of Moſes. The firſt inſtance occurs in one of the moſt remote periods of the Moſaic hiſtory, I mean the addreſs of Lamech to his

[12] See CHARDIN's *Travels*, Vol. II. c. xiv. POCOCK. *Spec. Hiſt. Arab.* p. 158.

[13] We may add, that poetry is much leſs liable to be corrupted than proſe. So faithful a preſerver of truth is metre, that what is liable to be changed, augmented, or violated, almoſt daily in proſe, may continue for ages in verſe, without variation, without even a change in the obſolete phraſeology. M.

wives,

wives, which is indeed but ill underſtood in general, becauſe the occaſion of it is very obſcurely intimated: nevertheleſs, if we conſider the apt conſtruction of the words, the exact diſtribution of the period into three diſtichs, and the two parallel, and as it were correſponding, ſentiments in each diſtich; I apprehend it will eaſily be acknowledged an indubitable ſpecimen of the poetry of the firſt ages;

" Hadah and Sillah hear my voice;
" Ye wives of Lamech hearken to my ſpeech;
" For I have ſlain a man, becauſe of my
" wounding;
" A young man, becauſe of my hurt.
" If Cain ſhall be avenged [14] ſeven times,
" Certainly Lamech ſeventy and ſeven [15]."

Another

[14] " If the murder of Cain ſhall be avenged."—That is, " If vengeance ſevenfold ſhall fall upon the head of him " that murders Cain, then vengeance ſeventy times ſeven " ſhall fall on him that murders Lamech." Agreeably to what is pronounced by God in the 15th verſe of the ſame chapter, " Whoſoever ſlayeth Cain, vengeance ſhall " be taken on him ſevenfold." T.

[15] GEN. iv. 23, 24. The Jews have indulged great liberty of fiction and conjecture concerning this paſſage, which has anſwered no other purpoſe than to render it more

Another example, which I ſhall point out to you, appears no leſs to bear the genuine marks

more perplexed to others alſo, who were unable to digeſt their whimſical and abſurd explications. To me there is very little obſcurity in the original; for though we are neceſſarily ignorant of the name of the perſon who was murdered, I think it is ſufficiently plain that ſome perſon was murdered by Lamech. I ſay *perſon*; for what the Jews have feigned concerning the death of two perſons, the one a youth, and the other a man, proceeds entirely from their ignorance of the nature of the Hebrew poetry, and particularly of the paralleliſm or repetition of certain members of the ſentences, which our Author has explained in a very maſterly manner in the 19th Lecture. Nor is there any more reaſon to diſtinguiſh between the youth and the man, than to ſuppoſe Hadah and Sillah other than the wives of Lamech, who are mentioned in the next line:

"Hadah and Sillah hear my voice,
"Ye wives of Lamech attend, &c."

The truth is, Lamech had committed a murder: he repents of the fact, but hopes, after the example of Cain, to eſcape with impunity, and with that hope he cheers his wives, who are anxious for his fate. It is not to be ſuppoſed that he addreſſed them in verſe; the ſubſtance of what he ſaid has been reduced to numbers for the ſake of preſerving it eaſily in the memory. This poem therefore conſtitutes a part of hiſtory known to the Iſraelites: and Moſes intimates to what Lamech it relates, namely, not to the ſon of Seth, the father of Noah, but to this Lamech of the ſeed of Cain: what he adds is to this effect: "This

"Lamech,

marks of poetry than the former, and that is the execration of Noah upon Ham; with the

" Lamech, who was of the ſeed of Cain, is the ſame who " complained to his wives in thoſe well-known tradi- " tional verſes, &c."

That Moſes has preſerved many relics of this kind, is evident from the fragments of verſe which are ſcattered throughout his writings, and which are very diſtinguiſhable from his uſual language. Such is that, which he relates GEN. iii. 24. of the Cherubs placed at the eaſt of the garden of Eden: under which appellation I underſtand to be meant, not angels, but the *Equi tonantes* of the Greek and Latin poets: the reaſons for which opinion I have more fully explained in the Commentaries of the Royal Society at Gottingen, T. I. p. 175. The paſſage is without doubt poetical: " He placed before the garden Cherubim " (*thundering horſes*) and a flaming ſword, to keep the " way of the tree of life:" in plain terms, the dread of the frequent tempeſts and daily thunders deterred men from that track, in which paradiſe was ſituated, leſt they ſhould eat of the tree of life. M.

The former part of the 23d verſe is thus tranſlated by HOUBIGANT:

" I, being wounded, have ſlain a man,
" Being aſſaulted, a young man."

This tranſlation is ingenious, and I think right. But even it ſeems to want ſome further explanation as well as confirmation; which, ſince he has omitted, I will attempt. The ſpeech of Lamech is an apology for an homicide committed in his own defence, upon ſome man who

the magnificent predictions of proſperity to his two brothers, to Shem in particular, and the

who violently aſſaulted him, and it appears ſtruck and wounded him. An homicide of this nature he oppoſes to the voluntary and inexcuſable fratricide of Cain. The phraſes which produce the obſcurity—*Le-petzangi*, and *Le-chaburathi*, "becauſe of my wound," that is, *a wound which was given me*, and "becauſe of my blows (or "ſtripes)," that is, *ſtripes inflicted upon me*, may I think be explained as follows. The affixes to nouns (as KIMCHIUS obſerves on ISAI. xxi. 2.) are taken actively as well as paſſively; thus *Chamaſi*, "my violence, or in-"jury," means a *violence committed againſt me*; GEN. xvi. 31. JER. li. 35. *Chamas Beni Jehoudah*, "the vio-"lence of the ſons of Judah;" JOEL iv. 19. *Chamas Eretz*, "the violence of the land," means *that which they have ſuffered*: "My ſervant ſhall juſtify many *Be-deangthi*, "in his knowledge," that is, *in their knowledge of him*; ISAI. liii. 11. *Reangecha*, "thy thoughts," mean *thoughts concerning thee*. PSAL. cxxxix. 17. The prepoſition ל (*le*) frequently means *becauſe*: "The ſhips that went to Ophir, "*Le-zahab*, becauſe (or for the ſake) of gold:" 1 KINGS xxii. 48. *Le-abiv ve-le-emeu*, &c. "becauſe of his father, "or becauſe of his mother, or becauſe of his brother, or "becauſe of his ſiſter, he ſhall not pollute himſelf." NUMB. vi. 7. See more in Noldius ad ל N° 28. *Author's Note.*

There is nothing in the context to induce a ſuſpicion that Lamech had committed a murder. By taking to himſelf *two* wives he firſt violated the divine inſtitution of marriage. Such an offence was likely to draw upon him the reſentment of his kindred, expoſe him to a particular quarrel

the ardent breathings of his ſoul for their future happineſs: theſe are expreſſed in three equal diviſions of verſes, concluding with an

quarrel (perhaps with his brother) and fill his wives with fear, leſt he ſhould be provoked to follow the example of Cain. To remove therefore their apprehenſions, he thus expoſtulates with them, contraſting the offences of polygamy and murder:

Hadah and Sillah hear my voice:
Ye wives of Lamech attend to my ſpeech:
Have I ſlain a man in my conteſt?
Yea, one born among my kindred?
If Cain ſhall be avenged ſeven times,
Aſſuredly ſhall Lamech ſeventy times ſeven.

כי in various inſtances is uſed interrogatively; 1 SAM. xxiv. 20. 2 KINGS xviii. 34. ISAI. xxix. 16. PROV. xxx. 4, &c. לפצעי, *in my diviſion* or ſtrife, from פצה, *ſcidit*, but if the derivative be referred to the ſecondary ſenſe: *vulneravit*—it may in that caſe be rendered, *from my wound*, or *the wound that I have inflicted*. ילד ſignifies *a ſon*, or *perſon born*, and ו very frequently occurs in the ſenſe of *yea*. חברת is, in various paſſages, equivalent to *union*, *alliance*, *affinity*. (In MAL. ii. 14. the ſame term is applied to *the marriage union*.)—*One born among my kindred* may be conſidered as ſynonymous with *my brother*. S. H.

I did not however think myſelf at liberty to depart in the text from that of our Author, though I think this explication exceedingly ingenious. The reader may for further information on this ſubject conſult DAWSON'S Tranſlation of GENESIS, c. iv. T.

indignant

indignant repetition of one of the preceding lines:

"Curſed be Canaan!
"A ſervant of ſervants to his brothers let him
"be!
"Bleſſed be Jehovah the God of Shem!
"And let Canaan be their ſervant!
"May God extend Japheth,
"And may he dwell in the tents of Shem!
"And let Canaan be their ſervant[16]."

The inſpired benedictions of the patriarchs Iſaac and Jacob are altogether of the ſame kind[17]: and the great importance of theſe prophecies, not only to the deſtiny of the people of Iſrael, but to that of the whole human race, renders it highly probable that they were extant in this form before the time of Moſes; and that they were afterwards committed to writing by the inſpired hiſtorian, exactly as he had received them from his anceſtors, without preſuming to beſtow on theſe ſacred oracles any adventitious ornaments or poetical colouring.

The matter will appear yet clearer, if we advert to ſome other verſes, a little different

[16] GEN. ix. 25—27.
[17] GEN. xxvii. 27—29, 39, 40.

in

in kind, to which the ſame hiſtorian appeals (as well known and popular) in teſtimony of the truth of his narration. Thus, when he relates the firſt incurſion of the Iſraelites into the country of the Amorites, in order to mark more preciſely the boundaries of that ſtate, and to explain more ſatisfactorily the nature of the victories not long before atchieved over the Moabites, he cites two fragments of poems; the one from the book of the Wars of Jehovah [18], the other from the Sayings (*Maſhalim*) of thoſe who ſpoke in parables [19]; that is, as appears from the nature of

[18] NUMB. xxi. 14, 15.

[19] Ibid. 27—30. Compare JER. xlviii. 45, 46. Αινιγματισται (*ainigmatiſtai*) SEPT. "Who theſe *Enigmatiſts* "are (ſays Auguſtin) is not very plain, ſince there is no "ſuch appellation in our language (Latin); nor indeed "is the word elſewhere found in the Holy Scriptures "(that is, in the Septuagint); but ſince they ſeem to "have been employed in ſinging a poem, in which was "celebrated a war, that had been carried on between the "Amorites and the Moabites, in which *Seor* King of "the Amorites was victorious, it is not improbable that "theſe Enigmatiſts may have been thoſe whom we now "call Poets; inaſmuch as it is cuſtomary with poets to "mingle enigmas and fables in their verſes, by which "they obſcurely indicate realities: for an enigma is no "other

of things, from ſome panegyrical or triumphal poem of the Amorites. To which we may add, what immediately follow, the prophecies of Balaam the Meſopotamian, pronounced alſo in the parabolic ſtyle, as appears from the extreme neatneſs of the compoſition, the metrical and parallel ſentences, the ſublimity of the language and ſentiment, and the uncommon elegance of

" other than a figurative mode of expreſſion, upon the " explanation of which depends our underſtanding the " author." Quæſt. xlv. in NUM. *Author's Note.*

This matter will appear clearer and more eaſy of conception, if the diſtinction be rightly obſerved between the two different ſignifications of the word *Maſhal:* the one more comprehenſive, and including all kind of poetry, on account of the figurative language; the other peculiar to a certain kind of poetry, which is oppoſed to the canticle or ſong. Our Author, in the following page, ſeems to apprehend rightly of the word in this double ſenſe; but I thus far differ from him, that I think it is not expreſſive of two particular ſpecies of poetry, but in the one ſenſe it means the whole genus, and in the other the particular ſpecies, which I juſt now pointed out. The LXX. have rendered this word very ill αινιγματισας; *Maſhal*, or *ſimilitude*, may indeed ſometimes denote an enigma; and if Auguſtin has miſtaken the meaning of the Septuagint, it is excuſable, ſince, whatever might be his ability in other reſpects, a profound knowledge of Hebrew was certainly not among his excellencies. M.

the

the verſe. Hence it is eaſy to collect, that this kind of poetry, which appears perfectly analogous to all the reſt of the Hebrew poetry that ſtill remains, was neither originally the production of Moſes, nor peculiar to the Jewiſh nation, but that it may be accounted among the firſt-fruits of human ingenuity, and was cultivated by the Hebrews and other Eaſtern nations from the firſt ages, as the recorder of events, the preceptor of morals, the hiſtorian of the paſt, and prophet of the future [20].

Concerning the utility of poetry, therefore, the Hebrews have maintained the ſame opinion throughout all ages. This being always accounted the higheſt commendation of ſcience and erudition; "To underſtand "a proverb and the interpretation; the "words of the wiſe and their dark ſay-"ings";" under which titles two ſpecies of poetry ſeem to be particularly indicated, dif-

[20] To the above examples from the books of Moſes add the following: GEN. xxi. 6, 7. xxiv. 60. xxv. 23. xxviii. 16, 17. Obſerve alſo whether the anſwer of God, NUMB. xii. 6—8. be not of the ſame kind. *Author's Note.*

[21] See PROV. i. 6. WISD. viii. 8. ECCLUS i. 25. vi. 35. xviii. 29. xxxix. 1, 2, 3.

ferent indeed in many reſpects, yet agreeing in ſome. The one I call *didactic*, which expreſſes ſome moral precept in elegant and pointed verſes, often illuſtrated by a compariſon either direct or implied; ſimilar to the γνωμαι (Gnomai) and adages of the wiſe men: the other was truly poetical, adorned with all the more ſplendid colouring of language, magnificently ſublime in the ſentiments, animated by the moſt pathetic expreſſion, and diverſified and embelliſhed by figurative diction and poetical imagery; ſuch are almoſt all the remaining productions of the Prophets. Brevity or conciſeneſs was a characteriſtic of each of theſe forms of compoſition, and a degree of obſcurity was not unfrequently attendant upon this ſtudied brevity. Each conſiſted of metrical ſentences; on which account chiefly the poetic and proverbial language ſeem to have obtained the ſame appellation: and in theſe two kinds of compoſition all knowledge human and divine was thought to be comprized.

The ſententious ſtyle, therefore, I define to be the primary characteriſtic of the Hebrew poetry, as being the moſt conſpicuous and comprehenſive of all. For although

that ſtyle ſeems naturally adapted only to the didactic, yet it is found to pervade the whole of the poetry of the Hebrews. There are indeed many paſſages in the ſacred writings highly figurative, and infinitely ſublime; but all of them manifeſtly aſſume a ſententious form. There are ſome too, and thoſe not inelegant, which poſſeſs little more of the characteriſtics of poetry than the verſification, and that terſeneſs or adaptation of the ſentences, which conſtitutes ſo important a part even of the harmony of verſe. This is manifeſt in moſt of the didactic pſalms, as well as in ſome others, the matter, order, diction, and thoughts of which are clearly hiſtorical; but the conformation of the ſentences wholly poetical. There is indeed ſo ſtrict an analogy between the ſtructure of the ſentences and the verſification, that when the former chances to be confuſed or obſcured, it is ſcarcely poſſible to form a conjecture concerning the diviſion of the lines or verſes, which is almoſt the only part of the Hebrew verſification that remains. It was therefore neceſſary, before I could explain the mechaniſm of the Hebrew verſe, to remark many

particulars, which properly belong to the preſent topic.

The reaſon of this (not to detain you with what is obvious in almoſt every page of the ſacred poetry) is as follows. The Hebrew poets frequently expreſs a ſentiment with the utmoſt brevity and ſimplicity, illuſtrated by no circumſtances, adorned with no epithets (which in truth they ſeldom uſe); they afterwards call in the aid of ornament; they repeat, they vary, they amplify the ſame ſentiment; and adding one or more ſentences which run parallel to each other, they expreſs the ſame or a ſimilar, and often a contrary ſentiment in nearly the ſame form of words. Of theſe three modes of ornament at leaſt they make the moſt frequent uſe, namely, the amplification of the ſame ideas, the accumulation of others, and the oppoſition or antitheſis of ſuch as are contrary to each other; they diſpoſe the correſponding ſentences in regular diſtichs adapted to each other, and of an equal length, in which, for the moſt part, things anſwer to things, and words to words, as the Son of Sirach ſays of the works of God, *two and two, one againſt the*

the other [32]. Theſe forms again are diverſified by notes of admiration, compariſon, negation, and more particularly interrogation, whence a ſingular degree of force and elevation is frequently added to the compoſition.

Each language poſſeſſes a peculiar genius and character, on which depend the principles of the verſification, and in a great meaſure the ſtyle or colour of the poetic diction. In Hebrew the frequent or rather perpetual ſplendour of the ſentences, and the accurate recurrence of the clauſes, ſeem abſolutely neceſſary to diſtinguiſh the verſe: ſo that what in any other language would appear a ſuperfluous and tireſome repetition, in this cannot be omitted without injury to the poetry. This excellence therefore the ſententious ſtyle poſſeſſes in the Hebrew poetry, that it neceſſarily prevents a proſaic mode of expreſſion, and always reduces a compoſition to a kind of metrical form. For, as Cicero remarks, "in certain forms of expreſſion "there exiſts ſuch a degree of conciſeneſs, "that a ſort of metrical arrangement fol-

[32] Ecclus xxxiii. 15.

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" lows of courſe. For when words or ſen-
" tences directly correſpond, or when con-
" traries are oppoſed exactly to each other,
" or even when words of a ſimilar ſound
" run parallel, the compoſition will in ge-
" neral have a metrical cadence [23]." It poſ-ſeſſes, however, great force in other reſpects, and produces ſeveral great and remarkable beauties of compoſition. For, as the ſacred poems derive from this ſource a great part of their elegance, harmony, and ſplendour, ſo they are not unfrequently indebted to it for their ſublimity and ſtrength. Frequent and laconic ſentences render the compoſition remarkably conciſe, harmonious, and animated; the brevity itſelf imparts to it additional ſtrength, and being contracted within a narrower ſpace, it has a more energetic and pointed effect.

Examples ſufficient to evince the truth of theſe remarks will occur hereafter in the paſſages which will be quoted in illuſtration of other parts of our ſubject: and, in all probability, on a future occaſion the nature of my undertaking will require a more ample diſcuſſion of this ſubject [24].

[23] Orator. [24] See Lect. XIX.

LEC-

LECTURE V.

OF THE FIGURATIVE STYLE, AND ITS DIVISIONS.

2. *The Figurative Style; to be treated rather according to the genius of the Hebrew poetry than according to the forms and arrangements of Rhetoricians — The definition and conſtituent parts of the Figurative Style,* METAPHOR, ALLEGORY, COMPARISON, PERSONIFICATION — *The reaſon of this mode of treating the ſubject: difficulties in reading the Hebrew poetry, which reſult from the Figurative Style; how to be avoided.* 1. *Of the* METAPHOR, *including a general diſquiſition concerning poetic imagery: the nature of which is explained; and four principal ſources pointed out: Nature, Common Life, Religion, Hiſtory.*

IN my laſt Lecture I offered it as my opinion, that the Hebrew word expreſſive of the poetic ſtyle had not one ſimple and diſtinct meaning, but might commodiouſly enough be ſuppoſed to admit of three conſtituent parts or diviſions: in other words, that it might imply the *ſententious*, the *figurative*, and the *ſublime*. On the ſententious ſtyle, its nature, origin, and effect in the Hebrew poetry, I offered ſuch brief remarks as occurred to me at the time: and now that

I am about to treat of the figurative ſtyle, I obſerve before me an infinity of matter and an ample field; in which leſt we ſhould too freely expatiate, or irregularly wander, the ſcope and order of our journey, the outlets of the road, the circuitous paths, and the moſt direct avenues, are in the firſt place to be carefully inveſtigated. In order to the full comprehenſion alſo of thoſe matters which will be treated of in this part, for they are in ſome degree remote from common uſe, it may not be improper previouſly to explain as clearly as poſſible, and therefore with ſome degree of copiouſneſs, my immediate deſign; on what principles, in what order and method, and to what end I mean to treat of the figures which are chiefly employed in the Hebrew poetry.

The word *Maſkal*, in its moſt common acceptation, denotes reſemblance, and is therefore directly expreſſive of the figurative ſtyle, as far as the nature of figures conſiſts in the ſubſtitution of words, or rather of ideas, for thoſe which they reſemble; which is the caſe even with moſt of the figures that have been remarked by the Rhetoricians. This definition therefore of the figurative ſtyle, drawn

drawn both from the writings of the Hebrews, and the ſenſe of the word itſelf, I mean to follow in explaining the nature of their poetry: and this I do the more willingly, becauſe it will enable me to confine our inveſtigation within narrower limits. I ſhall alſo venture to omit the almoſt innumerable forms of the Greek Rhetoricians, who poſſeſſed the faculty of inventing names in the higheſt perfection; I ſhall neglect even their primary diſtinction between tropes and figures[1], and their ſubdiviſions of the figures themſelves, denominating ſome figures of expreſſion, and ſome figures of ſentiment. In diſregarding theſe diſtinctions, I might in my own juſtification alledge the authority of C. Artorius Proculus, who gave the name of figure to a trope, as Quintilian informs us; and indeed the example of Quintilian himſelf[2]. I omit them, however, upon a dif-

[1] This diſtinction is very judiciouſly laid aſide, ſince each of theſe words is but a partial mode of expreſſing the ſame thing. A *trope* ſignifies no more than the *turning* a word from its appropriate meaning; and a *figure*, an appearance incidentally aſſumed, without the leaſt implication of its being borrowed. S. H.

[2] See QUINT. Lib. IX. 1.

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ferent ground; for I do not pretend to ſay that in their proper place they are deſtitute either of reality or uſe: but our preſent concern is not to explain the ſentiments of the Greek but of the Hebrew writers. By figurative language, I would be underſtood to mean that, in which one or more images or words are ſubſtituted in the room of others, or even introduced by way of illuſtration upon the principle of reſemblance. That reſemblance, if it be only intimated, and confined to a few words, is called a *Metaphor*; if the figure be continued, it is called an *Allegory*; if it be directly expreſſed by comparing the ideas together, and by the inſertion of any words expreſſive of likeneſs, it is called *Simile* or *Compariſon*[3]. On the ſame principle of reſemblance

[3] *Compariſon* appears to be the firſt and moſt natural of all rhetorical figures. When at a loſs to explain our meaning, we naturally apply to the aſſociating principle to furniſh an illuſtration: and this ſeems almoſt an involuntary act of the mind. A *Metaphor* is a compariſon, without the words indicating reſemblance. When a ſavage experienced a ſenſation, for which he had as yet no name, he applied that of the idea which moſt reſembled it, in order to explain himſelf. Thus the words expreſſing the faculties of the mind are taken from ſenſible images, as *fancy* from *phantaſma*; *idea* in the original language

ſemblance the *Proſopopœia*, or Perſonification, is alſo founded, when a character and perſon is

language means an *image* or *picture*; and a *way* has always been uſed to expreſs the mode of attaining our *end* or *deſire*.

There is, however, another reaſon for the uſe of metaphorical language: when the mind is agitated, the aſſociations are more ſtrongly felt, and the connected ideas will more readily preſent themſelves than at another time. On this account a man in a paſſion will frequently reject the words which ſimply expreſs his thoughts, and for the ſake of giving them more force, will make uſe of images ſtronger, more lively, and more congenial to the tone of his mind.

The principal advantage which the Metaphor poſſeſſes over the Simile or Compariſon, ſeems to conſiſt in the former tranſporting the mind, and carrying it nearer to the reality than the latter; as when we ſay—"Achilles "ruſhed like a lion," we have only the idea of a man going on furiouſly to battle; but when we ſay inſtead of Achilles—"The lion ruſhed on," the idea is more animated. There is alſo more of brevity in a ſtyle that abounds in Metaphors, than in a ſtyle which conſiſts more of Compariſons, and therefore it proves a better vehicle for the ſublime.

The rule which good writers ſeem to have adopted reſpecting the uſe of Similes or Metaphors is this. Where the reſemblance is very ſtrong and obvious, it may be expreſſed by a ſimple Metaphor, and it will in general be expreſſed more forcibly; but where the reſemblance is not ſo obvious, it requires to be more expanded, and then

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is aſſigned even to things inanimate or fictitious (which is a bolder ſpecies of metaphor) or when a probable but fictitious ſpeech is attributed to a real perſonage.

I mean, therefore, to treat of theſe figures in the order juſt now propoſed; not as ſuppoſing them the only figures made uſe of by the Hebrew poets*; but in the firſt place, becauſe

a Compariſon or Simile will neither appear formal nor pompous.

There is another obſervation concerning the uſe o theſe figures, which is more common, though I do not think the reaſon of it is generally underſtood. Compariſons are unnatural in extremes of *paſſion*, though Metaphors are not. The truth is, the mind when ſtrongly agitated readily catches at ſlight aſſociations, and Metaphors therefore are inſtantaneouſly formed; but it is impoſſible that the mind ſhould dwell upon them with the formality and exactneſs of a perſon making a Compariſon. T.

* To the figures ſpecified by our Author, Rhetoricians have added innumerable others of leſs importance. The principal of theſe, and the moſt connected with poetry, are *Metonomy*, *Periphraſis*, *Apoſtrophe*, and *Hyperbole*.

In order to explain the nature and origin of theſe and the other tropes or figures, I muſt remind the reader that the aſſociating principle is the true ſource of all figurative language. I muſt alſo remind him, that all ideas are aſſociated or introduced into the mind by one of theſe three

becauſe they chiefly come within the definition of the parabolic ſtyle; becauſe too they moſt

three relations: *Contiguity in time and place*, *cauſe and effect*, or *reſemblance*. On the latter of theſe relations depend *Compariſons*, *Metaphors*, *Allegories*, &c. and on the other relations depend the *Metonymy*, the *Periphraſis*, the *Proſopopœia*, and probably the *Apoſtrophe*.

The word *Metonymy* evidently means a *change of name*, an adoption of ſome other mark to ſignify an idea, than that which was originally aſſigned it. This figure therefore is moſt frequently derived from the relation of *cauſe and effect*, and ſometimes from that of contiguity: thus we ſubſtitute the cauſe for the effect, when we ſay—"We "have read Pope," for "the works of Pope;" and the effect for the cauſe, when we ſay—"The day aroſe," for "the ſun aroſe:" for further illuſtration I refer to Dr. PRIESTLEY'S *Inſtitutes of Oratory and Criticiſm*, p. 238. The *Periphraſis* is little elſe than a ſpecies of Metonymy, as "the lover of Daphne," for Apollo. For the connexion between the Metonymy and the Proſopopœia, ſee a note on the 13th Lecture. The *Apoſtrophe* is a more animated Proſopopœia, when the thing perſonified is ſpoken to in the ſecond perſon, or a diſtant perſon or thing is addreſſed as preſent. A moſt beautiful and pathetic inſtance is that of Eve, *Paradiſe Loſt*, B. II. v. 269.

The *Hyperbole* is nothing more than an exceſs of figurative language, the effect of paſſion. All the paſſions are inclined to magnify the objects. Injuries ſeem greater than they really are to thoſe who have received them; and dangers to thoſe who are in fear. The lover naturally makes a Divinity of his miſtreſs: valour and con-

moſt frequently occur in the ſacred poetry, and conſtitute ſome of its greateſt beauties: inſomuch that their true force and energy is in no other compoſitions ſo apparent. I muſt

tempt are equally inclined to degrade and diminiſh. This figure, therefore, in particular, requires paſſion to give it force or propriety; and if this be not the caſe, it renders a ſtyle very bombaſtic and frigid. Lucan is too fond of this figure. See the firſt ſix lines of ROWE's LUCAN, where "The Sun——

"——— ſicken'd to behold Emathia's plain,
"And would have fought the backward Eaſt again."

And in B. VI. v. 329.

"The miſſive arms fix'd all around he wears,
"And even his ſafety in his wounds he bears,
"Fenced with a fatal wood, a deadly grove of ſpears."

Nothing indeed can be more bombaſtic, than the whole deſcription of this warrior's death. The Poet calls upon the Pompeians to lay ſiege to him as they would to a town; to bring battering engines, flames, racks, &c. to ſubdue him. He is firſt compared to an elephant, and again to a hunted boar—at length——

———"when none were left him to repel,
"Fainting for want of foes the victor fell."

Some of the extravagance of the above may, however, be the fault of the Tranſlator, but how far I could not determine, as I have not the original by me; nor is it of any conſequence to the Engliſh reader. T.

add,

add, that it will not be ſufficient to illuſtrate them barely by producing a few examples, as if matters uncommon and abſtruſe were the object of our inquiry, and not ſuch as ſpontaneouſly occur on almoſt every occaſion. It will be neceſſary to proceed ſtill further if poſſible; it will be neceſſary to inquire whether there was any mode of uſing them peculiar to the Hebrews; the particular and interior elegancies of them are to be inveſtigated: and to this object of our purſuit we ſhall not, I apprehend, find any eaſier acceſs, than by that track, which the nature of the ſubject itſelf obviouſly indicates to us.

It is the peculiar deſign of the figurative ſtyle, taken in the ſenſe in which I have explained it, to exhibit objects in a clearer or more ſtriking, in a ſublimer or more forcible manner. Since, therefore, whatever is employed with a view to the illuſtration and elevation of another ſubject, ought itſelf to be as familiar and obvious, at the ſame time as grand and magnificent as poſſible, it becomes neceſſary to adduce images from thoſe objects, with which both the writers and the perſons they addreſs are well acquainted, and which have been conſtantly eſteemed of the higheſt

higheſt dignity and importance. On the other hand, if the reader be accuſtomed to habits of life totally different from thoſe of the author, and be converſant only with different objects; in that caſe many deſcriptions and ſentiments, which were clearly illuſtrated and magnificently expreſſed by the one, will appear to the other mean and obſcure, harſh and unnatural: and this will be the caſe more or leſs, in proportion as they differ or are more remote from each other in time, ſituation, cuſtoms ſacred or profane, in fine, in all the forms of public and private life. On this account difficulties muſt occur in the peruſal of almoſt every work of literature, and particularly in poetry, where every thing is depicted and illuſtrated with the greateſt variety and abundance of imagery; they muſt be ſtill more numerous in ſuch of the poets as are foreign and ancient; in the Orientals above all foreigners, they being the fartheſt removed from our cuſtoms and manners; and of all the Orientals more eſpecially in the Hebrews, theirs being confeſſedly the moſt ancient compoſitions extant. To all who apply themſelves to the ſtudy of their poetry, for the reaſons which I have enumerated,

merated, difficulties and inconveniencies muſt neceſſarily occur. Not only the antiquity of theſe writings forms a principal obſtruction in many reſpects; but the manner of living, of ſpeaking, of thinking, which prevailed in thoſe times, will be found altogether different from our cuſtoms and habits. There is therefore great danger, leſt viewing them from an improper ſituation, and raſhly eſtimating all things by our own ſtandard, we form an erroneous judgment.

Of this kind of miſtake we are to be always aware, and theſe inconveniencies are to be counteracted by all poſſible diligence: nor is it enough to be acquainted with the language of this people, their manners, diſcipline, rites and ceremonies; we muſt even inveſtigate their inmoſt ſentiments, the manner and connexion of their thoughts; in one word, we muſt ſee all things with their eyes, eſtimate all things by their opinions: we muſt endeavour as much as poſſible to read Hebrew as the Hebrews would have read it. We muſt act as the Aſtronomers with regard to that branch of their ſcience which is called comparative, who, in order to form a more perfect idea of the general ſyſtem, and its

different parts, conceive themſelves as paſſing through, and ſurveying the whole univerſe, migrating from one planet to another, and becoming for a ſhort time inhabitants of each. Thus they clearly contemplate, and accurately eſtimate what each poſſeſſes peculiar to itſelf with reſpect to ſituation, celerity, ſatellites, and its relation to the reſt; thus they diſtinguiſh what and how different an appearance of the univerſe is exhibited according to the different ſituations from which it is contemplated. In like manner, he who would perceive and feel the peculiar and interior elegancies of the Hebrew poetry, muſt imagine himſelf exactly ſituated as the perſons for whom it was written, or even as the writers themſelves; he muſt not attend to the ideas which on a curſory reading certain words would obtrude upon his mind; he is to feel them as a Hebrew, hearing or delivering the ſame words, at the ſame time, and in the ſame country. As far as he is able to purſue this plan, ſo far he will comprehend their force and excellence. This indeed in many caſes it will not be eaſy to do; in ſome it will be impoſſible; in all, however, it ought to be regarded, and in theſe paſſages particularly

particularly in which the figurative ſtyle is found to prevail.

In the Metaphor for inſtance (and what I remark concerning it may be applied to all the reſt of the figures, ſince they are all naturally allied to each other) two circumſtances are to be eſpecially regarded, on which its whole force and elegance will depend: firſt, that reſemblance which is the ground-work of the figurative and parabolic ſtyle, and which will perhaps be ſufficiently apparent, even from a common and indiſtinct knowledge of the objects; and ſecondly, the beauty or dignity of the idea which is ſubſtituted for another; and this is a circumſtance of unuſual nicety. An opinion of grace and dignity reſults frequently, not ſo much from the objects themſelves, in which theſe qualities are ſuppoſed to exiſt, as from the diſpoſition of the ſpectator; or from ſome ſlight and obſcure relation or connexion which they have with ſome other things. Thus it ſometimes happens, that the external form and lineaments may be ſufficiently apparent, though the original and intrinſic beauty and elegance be totally eraſed by time.

For theſe reaſons, it will perhaps not be an uſeleſs undertaking, when we treat of the Metaphors of the ſacred poets, to enter more fully into the nature of their poetical imagery in general, of which the Metaphor conſtitutes ſo principal a part. By this mode of proceeding, we ſhall be enabled not only to diſcern the general beauty and elegance of this figure in the Hebrew poetry, but the peculiar elegance, which it frequently poſſeſſes, if we only conſider how forcible it muſt have appeared to thoſe for whom it was originally intended; and what a connexion and agreement theſe figurative expreſſions muſt have had with their circumſtances, feelings, and opinions. Thus many expreſſions and alluſions, which even now appear beautiful, muſt, when conſidered in this manner, ſhine with redoubled luſtre; and many, which now ſtrike the ſuperficial reader as coarſe, mean, or deformed, muſt appear graceful, elegant, and ſublime.

The whole courſe of nature, this immenſe univerſe of things, offers itſelf to human contemplation, and affords an infinite variety, a confuſed aſſemblage, a wilderneſs, as it were, of images, which being collected as

the materials of poetry, are ſelected and produced as occaſion dictates. The mind of man is that mirror of Plato [5], which as he turns about at pleaſure, and directs to a different point of view, he creates another ſun, other ſtars, planets, animals, and even another ſelf. In this ſhadow or image of himſelf, which man beholds when the mirror is turned inward towards himſelf, he is enabled in ſome degree to contemplate the ſouls of other men: for, from what he feels and perceives in himſelf, he forms conjectures concerning others; and apprehends and deſcribes the manners, affections, conceptions of others from his own. Of this aſſemblage of images, which the human mind collects from all nature, and even from itſelf, that is, from its own emotions and operations, the leaſt clear and evident are thoſe which are explored by reaſon and argument; the more evident and diſtinct are thoſe which are formed from the impreſſions made by external objects on the ſenſes; and of theſe, the cleareſt and moſt vivid are thoſe which are perceived by the eye. Hence poetry

[5] *De Rep.* Lib. X. ſub init.

abounds moſt in thoſe images which are furniſhed by the ſenſes, and chiefly thoſe of the ſight; in order to depict the obſcure by the more manifeſt, the ſubtile by the more ſubſtantial; and, as far as ſimplicity is its object, it purſues thoſe ideas which are moſt familiar and moſt evident; of which there is ſuch an abundance, that they ſerve as well the purpoſe of ornament and variety, as that of illuſtration.

Thoſe images or pictures of external objects, which like lights adorn and diſtinguiſh the poetic diction, are indeed infinite in number. In an immenſity of matter, however, that we may be enabled to purſue ſome kind of order, and not wander in uncertainty and doubt, we may venture to fix upon four ſources of theſe ideas, whither all that occur may be commodiouſly referred. Thus, poetical imagery may be derived firſt, from natural objects; ſecondly, from the manners, arts, and circumſtances of common life; thirdly, from things ſacred; and laſtly, from the more remarkable facts recorded in ſacred hiſtory. From each of theſe topics a few caſes will be ſelected, and illuſtrated by examples, which though chiefly of the Metaphorical

phorical kind, will yet be in a great meaſure applicable to the other figures which have been ſpecified; theſe we ſhall afterwards take an opportunity to explain, when not only the figures themſelves will be noticed, but alſo the different forms and rules for their introduction and embelliſhment.

LECTURE VI.

OF POETIC IMAGERY

FROM THE OBJECTS OF NATURE.

The frequent uſe of the Metaphor renders a ſtyle magnificent, but often obſcure: the Hebrew poets have accompliſhed the ſublime without loſing perſpicuity—Three cauſes aſſigned for this ſingular fact: firſt, the imagery which they introduce is in general derived from familiar objects: again, in the uſe and accommodation of it they purſue a certain cuſtom and analogy: laſtly, they make the moſt free uſe of that which is moſt familiar, and the nature and extent of which is moſt generally known—Theſe obſervations confirmed by examples (1.) from natural objects: ſuch as are common to mankind in general; ſuch as are more familiar to the Hebrews than to others; and ſuch as are peculiar to them.

"THE great excellence of the poetic "dialect," as Ariſtotle moſt judiciouſly remarks, "conſiſts in perſpicuity without "meanneſs. Familiar terms and words in "common uſe form a clear and perſpicuous, "but frequently a low ſtyle; unuſual or "foreign expreſſions give it an air of gran-

"deur,

" deur, but frequently render it obſcure [1]." Of thoſe which he calls foreign, the principal force lies in the Metaphor; but " as the " temperate and reaſonable uſe of this figure " enlivens a compoſition, ſo the frequent " introduction of Metaphors obſcures it, " and if they very commonly occur, it will " be little better than an enigma [2]." If the Hebrew poets be examined by the rules and precepts of this great philoſopher and critic, it will readily be allowed, that they have aſſiduouſly attended to the ſublimity of their compoſitions by the abundance and ſplendour of their figures; though it may be doubted whether they might not have been more temperate in the uſe of them. For in thoſe poems at leaſt, in which ſomething of uncommon grandeur and ſublimity is aimed at, there predominates a perpetual, I had almoſt

[1] *Poet.* c. 22. Modern writers are hardly aware of the ill conſequence of what is called far-fetched imagery, or that which is taken from objects not generally known. This was the great error of Cowley, and the metaphyſical poets of the laſt century; an error for which no beauties can compenſate, which always gives a harſhneſs, often a proſaic appearance to poetry, and never fails to be attended with ſome degree of obſcurity. T.

[2] Ib. & QUINT. viii. 6.

ſaid

ſaid a continued uſe of the Metaphor, ſometimes daringly introduced, ſometimes ruſhing in with imminent hazard of propriety. A Metaphor thus licentiouſly intruded, is frequently continued to an immoderate extent. The Orientals are attached to this ſtyle of compoſition; and many flights which our ears, too faſtidious perhaps in theſe reſpects, will ſcarcely bear, muſt be allowed to the general freedom and boldneſs of theſe writers. But if we examine the ſacred poems, and conſider at the ſame time that a great degree of obſcurity muſt reſult from the total oblivion in which many ſources of their imagery muſt be involved; of which many examples are to be found in the Song of Solomon, as well as in other parts of the ſacred writings; we ſhall, I think, find cauſe to wonder that in writings of ſo great antiquity, and in ſuch an unlimited uſe of figurative expreſſion, there ſhould yet appear ſo much purity and perſpicuity, both in ſentiment and language. In order to explore the real cauſe of this remarkable fact, and to explain more accurately the genius of the parabolic ſtyle, I ſhall premiſe a few obſervations concerning the uſe of the Metaphor in the

the Hebrew poetry; which I truſt will be ſufficiently clear to thoſe who peruſe it with attention, and which I think in general are founded in truth.

In the firſt place, the Hebrew poets frequently make uſe of imagery borrowed from common life, and from objects well known and familiar. On this the perſpicuity of figurative language will be found in a great meaſure to depend: For a principal uſe of Metaphors is to illuſtrate the ſubject by a tacit compariſon; but if inſtead of familiar ideas, we introduce ſuch as are new, and not perfectly underſtood; if we endeavour to demonſtrate what is plain by what is occult, inſtead of making a ſubject clearer, we render it more perplexed and difficult. To obviate this inconvenience, we muſt take care, not only to avoid the violent and too frequent uſe of Metaphors, but alſo not to introduce ſuch as are obſcure and but ſlightly related. From theſe cauſes, and eſpecially from the latter, ariſes the difficulty of the Latin ſatyriſt Perſius; and but for the uncommon accuracy of the ſacred poets in this reſpect, we ſhould now be ſcarcely able to comprehend a ſingle word of their productions.

In

In the next place, the Hebrews not only deduce their Metaphors from familiar, or well-known objects, but preſerve one conſtant track and manner in the uſe and accommodation of them to their ſubject. The parabolic may indeed be accounted a peculiar ſtyle, in which things moral, political, and divine, are marked and repreſented by compariſons implied or expreſſed and adopted from ſenſible objects. As in common and plain language, therefore, certain words ſerve for ſigns of certain ideas; ſo for the moſt part, in the parabolic ſtyle, certain natural images ſerve to illuſtrate certain ideas more abſtruſe and refined. This aſſertion indeed is not to be underſtood abſolutely without exception; but thus far at leaſt we may affirm, that the ſacred poets in illuſtrating the ſame ſubject, make a much more conſtant uſe of the ſame imagery than other poets are accuſtomed to: and this practice has a ſurprizing effect in preſerving perſpicuity.

I muſt obſerve in the laſt place, that the Hebrews employ more freely and more daringly that imagery in particular, which is borrowed from the moſt obvious and familiar objects, and the figurative effect of which is eſtabliſhed

eſtabliſhed and defined by general and conſtant uſe. This, as it renders a compoſition clear and luminous, even where there is the greateſt danger of obſcurity; ſo it ſhelters effectually the ſacred poets from the imputation of exuberance, harſhneſs, or bombaſt [3].

In order to confirm and illuſtrate by examples what has been briefly ſet forth in the preceding remarks, I ſhall proceed to conſider a few inſtances of Metaphors derived from natural objects [4], and ſuch as are moſt in

[3] It is very obſervable in our own as well as other languages, how much Metaphors loſe of the figurative ſenſe by repetition; and it is curious to remark how Metaphors are in this manner derived from one another. From the reſemblance of a narrow bed of metal running in the earth to the ſituation of a vein in the human body, it has taken that name; and hence I apprehend are derived the expreſſions, a *vein of poetry*, a *vein of humour*, &c. T.

[4] The frequent recurrence for metaphorical expreſſions to natural objects, and particularly to plants and to trees, is ſo characteriſtic of the Hebrew poetry, that it might be almoſt called the *botanical* poetry. This circumſtance, however, is not at all extraordinary, if we conſider that the greater part of that people were occupied with tilling the earth, and keeping their flocks; and further, that the cultivation of poetry, inſtead of being confined to the learned,

was

in uſe: This I ſhall do in ſuch a manner, that whatever obſervations occur upon one or

was ſo generally diffuſed, that every valley re-echoed the ſongs of the ſhepherds. Hence in the very few remains of the Hebrew writings which are come down to us, I mean the Scriptures, there are upwards of 250 botanical terms, which none uſe ſo frequently as the poets: and this circumſtance I think gives an air of paſtoral elegance to their poetry, which any modern writer will emulate in vain.

It is, however, extraordinary, that the ſtars ſhould be ſo ſeldom mentioned in the Hebrew poetry, for the names of not more than three or four occur in the whole Bible. It has been ſaid, that the patriarchal ſhepherds applied very much to the ſtudy of aſtronomy; but if ſo, whence is it, that we meet with ſuch frequent alluſions to botanical ſubjects, and ſo few to the heavenly luminaries? A comet is, however, I think ſpoken of in Numb. xxiv. 17. and in alluſion to David, but it is by Balaam, who, reſiding on the borders of the Euphrates, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe was not altogether unacquainted with the Babyloniſh ſciences. M.

There appears but little foundation for this laſt remark of the learned Profeſſor. For in reality, ſo little are the heavenly bodies ſubjects of poetic alluſion, that we find them but ſeldom introduced into any poetry either ancient or modern. Our Annotator ſeems to forget that poetry is no more than painting in language, and has not reſpect to names but appearances. The appearance of every ſtar is nearly the ſame, and conſequently they can furniſh no great variety of imagery, and that can only relate to their general

or two of them, may be applied to many other inſtances.

The images of *light* and *darkneſs* are commonly made uſe of in all languages to imply or denote proſperity and adverſity, agreeably to the common ſenſe and perception which all men have of the objects themſelves. But the Hebrews employ thoſe Metaphors more frequently, and with leſs variation than other people; indeed they ſeldom refrain from them whenever the ſubject requires, or will even admit of their introduction. Theſe expreſſions, therefore, may be accounted among thoſe forms of ſpeech, which in the parabolic ſtyle are eſtabliſhed and defined; ſince

general qualities, their ſplendour, &c. whereas the nature and viſible qualities of plants are infinitely diverſified, and therefore admit of a much greater variety of alluſion. Indeed a poem, the principal imagery of which conſiſted of the names of ſtars, would be a very ſtrange and a very dull production. We cannot, therefore, argue from the ſilence of the Hebrew poetry, that Moſes or the writers of the Scriptures were ignorant of aſtronomy; neither is it fair to ſuppoſe that a *nation* of *ſhepherds*, in the *ſerene country* of the Eaſt, were unacquainted with the *hoſt* of *heaven*, which, in truth, from theſe cauſes, were the objects of adoration, and even of worſhip, in thoſe parts, as appears from the Preface to Mr. WOOD's *Account of the Ruins of Ba[illegible]* T.

they

they exhibit the moſt noted and familiar images, and the application of them on this occaſion is juſtified by an acknowledged analogy, and approved by conſtant and unvarying cuſtom. In the uſe of images, ſo conſpicuous and ſo familiar among the Hebrews, a degree of boldneſs is excuſable. The Latins introduce them more ſparingly, and therefore are more cautious in the application of them:

> Reſtore, great Chief, thy country's light!
> Diſpel the dreary ſhades of night!
> Thy aſpect like the ſpring ſhall cheer,
> And brighter ſuns ſhall gild the year [5].

The moſt reſpectable of the Roman Muſes have ſcarcely any thing more elegant, I will add at the ſame time that they have ſcarcely any thing bolder on any ſimilar occaſion. But the Hebrews, upon a ſubject more ſublime indeed in itſelf, and illuſtrating it by an idea which was more habitual to them, more daringly exalt their ſtrains, and give a looſe rein to the ſpirit of poetry. They diſplay, for inſtance, not the image of the Spring, of Aurora, of the dreary Night, but the Sun

[5] Hor. *Carm.* iv. 5.

and

and Stars as riſing with increaſed ſplendour in a new creation, or again involved in chaos and primeval darkneſs. Does the ſacred bard promiſe to his people a renewal of the divine favour, and a recommencement of univerſal proſperity? In what magnificent colours does he depict it! ſuch indeed as no tranſlation can illuſtrate, but ſuch as none can obſcure:

" The light of the moon ſhall be as the light of
" the ſun[6],
" And the light of the ſun ſhall be ſevenfold[7]."

But even this is not ſufficient:

" No longer ſhalt thou have the ſun for thy light
" by day;
" Nor by night ſhall the brightneſs of the moon
" enlighten thee:
" For

[6] Hence Milton perhaps adopted his
——" another morning
" Ris'n on midnoon," &c.
Par. Loſt, V. 308. S. H.

[7] ISAI. XXX. 26. Theſe and the following deſcriptions of the increaſed ſplendour of the ſun and the ſtars, are not taken from natural objects, but from fable. The remarkable felicity of the people is compared with that golden age, of which the prophets had acquired a knowledge

" For Jehovah ſhall be to thee an everlaſting
" light,
" And thy God ſhall be thy glory.
" Thy ſun ſhall no more decline;
" Neither ſhall thy moon wane;
" For Jehovah ſhall be thine everlaſting light;
" And the days of thy mourning ſhall ceaſe[8]."

In another place he has admirably diverſified the ſame ſentiment:

" And the moon ſhall be confounded, and the
" ſun ſhall be aſhamed;
" For Jehovah God of Hoſts ſhall reign
" On mount Sion, and in Jeruſalem;
" And before his antients ſhall he be glorified[9]."

On the other hand, denouncing ruin againſt the proud King of Egypt:

" And when I ſhall put thee out, I will cover
" the heavens,
" And the ſtars thereof will I make dark;
" I will involve the ſun in a cloud,
" Nor ſhall the moon give out her light.

from the Egyptians. Iſaiah has expatiated very much upon this image, of which more in the notes to the 9th Lecture. M.

[8] Isai. lx. 19, 20.

[9] Isai. xxiv. 23.

" All

" All the bright lights of heaven will I make
" dark over thee,
" And I will ſet darkneſs upon thy land, ſaith
" the Lord JEHOVAH [10]."

Theſe expreſſions are bold and daring: but the imagery is well known, the uſe of it is common, the ſignification definite; they are therefore perſpicuous, clear, and truly magnificent.

There are, moreover, other images from natural objects, which although in ſome meaſure common to other nations as well as the Hebrews, are nevertheleſs, from the ſituation and nature of the country, much better known and more familiar to them. There is no metaphor more frequent in the ſacred poems, than that by which ſudden and great calamities are expreſſed under the figure of a deluge of waters. This metaphor ſeems to have been remarkably familiar to the Hebrews, as if directly taken from the nature and ſtate of the country. The river Jordan was immediately before their eyes [11], which annually overflowed its banks; for the ſnows

[10] EZEK. xxxii. 7, 8.

[11] JOSH. iii. 15. 1 CHRON. xii. 15. ECCLUS xxiv. 26.

of Lebanon and the neighbouring mountains being melted in the beginning of the ſummer, the waters of the river were often ſuddenly augmented by the torrents which burſt forth from them. The whole country of Paleſtine [12] indeed was watered by very few perennial currents; but being chiefly mountainous, was expoſed to frequent floods, ruſhing violently along the valleys and narrow paſſages, after great tempeſts of rain, which periodically took place at certain ſeaſons: and on this account Moſes [13] himſelf commends to the Iſraelites the country which they were about to invade, as being totally different from every thing they had experienced in Egypt, or in the deſert of Arabia. This image, therefore, though known to all poets and adopted by moſt, may be accounted peculiarly familiar, local in a manner to the Hebrews, and of conſequence we cannot wonder at its frequent introduction into their compoſitions. The Prophet ſeems to have depicted the face of nature exactly as it appeared to him, and to have adapted it to the figurative deſcription

[12] See SANDYS's *Travels*, B. III.

[13] DEUT. viii. 7. xi. 10, 11.

of

of his own ſituation, when from the banks of Jordan, and the mountains at the head of that river, he pours forth the tempeſtuous violence of his ſorrow with a force of language and an energy of expreſſion, which has been ſeldom equalled:

" Deep calleth unto deep, in the voice of thy
" cataracts;
" All thy waves and thy billows have gone over
" me [14]."

It may not be improper to remark in this place, that though this metaphor is ſo uſual in all the other ſacred writers, whenever an occaſion preſents itſelf of introducing it, the author of Job, in the whole of that poem, which from the nature of the ſubject preſented excellent opportunities of employing it, has not more than twice [15], and then but ſlightly, made the leaſt alluſion to it. Nature, indeed, preſented a different aſpect to the author, whoever he was, of that moſt noble poem, if, as many learned men conjecture, it was compoſed in ſome part of Arabia, for which, I confeſs, there is great appearance

[14] PSAL. xcii. 7.
[15] See JOB xxii. 11. xxvii. 20.

of argument, from that famous ſimile [16], in which he compares his friends with the perfidious brook; a compariſon manifeſtly taken from the rocky parts of Arabia, and adorned by many images proper to that region.

Finally, there is a ſpecies of imagery derived alſo from natural objects, altogether peculiar to the Hebrews. Among the mountains of Paleſtine, the moſt remarkable, and conſequently the moſt celebrated in the ſacred poetry, are Mount Lebanon and Mount Carmel. The one, remarkable as well for its height as for its age, magnitude, and the abundance of the cedars which adorned its ſummit, exhibiting a ſtriking and ſubſtantial appearance of ſtrength and majeſty. The other, rich and fruitful, abounding with vines, olives, and delicious fruits, in a moſt flouriſhing ſtate both by nature and cultivation, and diſplaying a delightful appearance of fertility, beauty, and grace. The different form and aſpect of theſe two mountains is moſt accurately defined by Solomon, when he compares the manly dignity with Lebanon [17], and the beauty and delicacy of the

[16] Job vi. 15—20. [17] Cant. v. [illegible] vii. 5.

female

female with Carmel. Each of them ſuggeſts a different general image, which the Hebrew poets adopt for different purpoſes, expreſſing that by a metaphor, which more timid writers would delineate by a direct compariſon. Thus Lebanon is uſed, by a very bold figure, for the whole people of the Jews, or for the ſtate of the Church [18]; for Jeruſalem [19]; for the temple of Jeruſalem [20]; for the king of Aſſyria [21] even, and for his army; for whatever in a word is remarkable, auguſt, and ſublime [22]: and in the ſame manner whatever poſſeſſes much fertility, wealth, or beauty, is called Carmel [23]. Thus too, by the fat rams, heifers, and bulls of Baſan [24], by the wild beaſt of the reeds [25], or lion of Jordan, are

[18] ISAI. xxxiii. 9. xxxv. 2.

[19] ISAI. xxxvii. 24. JER. xxii. 6, 23.

[20] ZECH. xi. 1.

[21] ISAI. x. 34.

[22] ISAI. xi. 13. See EZEK. xxxi.

[23] See as above, and ISAI. x. 18. MIC. vii. 14. JER. iv. 26.

[24] PSAL. xxii. 13. EZEK. xxxix. 18. AMOS iv. 1.

[25] PSAL. lxviii. 31. *Chaiah Kaneh*, "The wild beaſt of "the reeds," is a periphraſis for, "the lion;" and that by no means obſcure, if we beſtow upon it a little attention.

are denoted the inſolent and cruel tyrants of the Gentiles. In this and other imagery of the

The lions make their dens very commonly among the reeds. "Innumerable lions wander about among the reeds and "copſes on the borders of the rivers in Meſopotamia." AM. MAR. Lib. xviii. c. 7. This is ſo familiar to the Arabs, that they have a particular name for the *den* or *haunt* of a lion, when it is formed among the reeds. BOCHART. *Hierog.* Par. I. Lib. iii. c. 2. The river Jordan was particularly infeſted with lions, which concealed themſelves among the thick reeds upon the banks. JOHAN. PHOCAS. *Deſcrip. Loc. Sanct.* c. 23. See alſo MAUNDREL's *Travels*, JEROME upon theſe words of ZECHARIAH xi. 3. "The voice of the roaring of young "lions, for the pride of Jordan is ſpoiled." "With the "river Jordan (ſays he) which is the largeſt in Judea, "and near which there are many lions, the prophet aſſo-"ciates the roaring of thoſe animals, on account of the "heat of the climate, the vicinity to the deſert, the ex-"tent of that vaſt wilderneſs, the reeds and the deep "ſedge which grow about it." Hence in JER. iv. 7. the lion is ſaid to go forth *Me-ſhechehu* (from his thicket); and xlix. 19. "to aſcend from the overflowing of Jordan." —In this place, therefore, (PSAL. lxviii. 31.) the *wild beaſt* of the *reeds*, the *herd* of the *ſtrong*, and the *calves*, are the lions, the bulls, and the beaſts wantoning about, or in plain terms, the fierce and inſolent tyrants: of whom, by a continuation of the Metaphor, the Prophet adds, "each "of them eagerly" (for there is that force in the diſtributive in the ſingular number, and in the conjugation Hithpael) "*ſtriking with* their feet, and diſturbing the "*ſilver*,

the ſame kind, though the ſacred writers preſume to attempt what would not be allowed

" *ſilver*, or perhaps *deſirable*, *rivers*;" that is, deſtroying, and laying waſte the pleaſant places of Judea. This very image is adopted by EZEKIEL, c. xxxii. 2. and again c. xxxiv. 18, 19. in which places the verb *raphas* thrice occurs in that ſenſe; ſee alſo DAN. vii. 19. But whether *rutz* be ſpoken of the motion of the river, as in the Latin *currere* (VIRG. *Georg.* i. 132.) ſo as to ſignify the river, is not altogether ſo plain.

" This word (*retzi*) ſeems in the Arabic to convey " the idea of water. For there is a verb *ruz*, *to afford* " *plenty of drink*; or *to contain ſtagnant water*, *as a fiſh-* " *pond*, or *valley*: and the noun *rutz*, *a quantity of water* " *lying in the bottom of a lake*, *or ciſtern*." H.

A gentleman of great learning and genius has furniſhed me with another explication of this paſſage, which perhaps will attract the attention of the learned reader.

This learned man interprets the whole verſe in this manner:—" Conſume the *wild beaſt* of the reed; the " multitude of thoſe who are ſtrong in the calves of " the nations; who excite themſelves with frag- " ments of ſilver: diſperſe the people who delight in " war." The wild beaſt of the reed is the Hippopotamus, which lives among the reeds of the Nile: under this Metaphor the people of Egypt is properly delineated, which of itſelf opens the way to the explication of the whole verſe. For the Egyptians are indeed alluded to through the whole of the paſſage: they were remarkable for the worſhip of calves, and that of *Iſis* and *Apis* in the form of an ox; and for their religious dances before theſe idols

lowed in the Greek and Latin poets, yet they cannot be accuſed of any deficiency in perſpicuity or elegance, eſpecially if it be re-

idols to the muſic of timbrels. The Chaldee runs thus: "The aſſembly of the ſtrong, who put their truſt in the "calf-idols of the nations."—"Strong in the calves of "the nations," is a phraſe analogous to that, EPH. vi. 10. "Be *ſtrong in* the Lord," and is an Hebraiſm. The manner of dancing in the worſhip of the Egyptian idols, is confirmed from EXOD. xxxii. 6, 19. alſo both it and the uſe of the timbrel, HEROD. Lib. ii. The word רפד is totally different from רפס, which is alſo found in PROV. vi. 3. where the VULGATE renders it *haſten thee*, or better, *excite thee*, ſince it is in Hithpael. In the Chaldee it means *to trample*; in the Syriac *to dance*; in the Arabic *to ſpurn*; whence in this place, "excite or ſtimulate "themſelves to dancing." "With fragments of ſilver" (ſo literally); that is, with the ſmall pieces or laminæ of metal round the timbrel, which produce the jingling noiſe when the inſtrument is beaten. The timbrel was formerly a warlike inſtrument: "The Queen calls forth "the band with warlike timbrels," VIRG. Whence PROPERTIUS alſo oppoſes the Egyptian timbrel to the Roman trumpet in the battle of Actium (Lib. iii. ix. 43.) If we conſider it in this light, it will ſerve much to clear up what follows: "diſperſe the people who delight in "war." Thus we have not only a clear deſcription of the Egyptians, but one that agrees admirably with the context: "Princes come out of Egypt," &c.

Author's Note.

2 membered

membered that the objects which furniſhed them with this imagery were all familiar, or, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, indigenous to the Hebrews.

In a word, we may generally remark upon this head, that all poetry, and particularly that of the Hebrews, deduces its principal ornaments or imagery from natural objects: and ſince theſe images are formed in the mind of each writer, and expreſſed conformably to what occurs to his ſenſes, it cannot otherwiſe happen, but, that through diverſity of ſituation, ſome will be more familiar, ſome almoſt peculiar to certain nations; and even thoſe which ſeem moſt general, will always have ſome latent connexion with their immediate origin, and with their native ſoil. It is the firſt duty of a critic, therefore, to remark, as far as is poſſible, the ſituation and habits of the author, the natural hiſtory of his country, and the ſcene of the poem. Unleſs we continually attend to theſe points, we ſhall ſcarcely be able to judge with any degree of certainty concerning the elegance or propriety of the ſentiments: the plaineſt will ſometimes eſcape our obſervation; the

peculiar

peculiar and interior excellencies will remain totally concealed [26].

[26] We muſt not omit noticing in this place, thoſe images which are derived from rivers and fountains, and the earth recreated with rain; which are indeed uſed by our poets, but more frequently by the Orientals. For the ſcarcity of water, and the extreme heat of the ſummer, together with the wonderful fertility of the ſoil, when watered, render this a more elegant and jocund compariſon in the Eaſt than with us. In ſpring and ſummer, if the Eaſt-wind continues to blow a few days, the fields are in general ſo parched, that ſcarcely a blade of any thing green remains; many rivers and ſtreams are dried up, the others are rendered briny, and all nature ſeems at the point of diſſolution. After a plentiful ſhower, however, the fields revive beyond all expectation, the rivers reſume their courſe, and the ſprings pour forth more delicious water. Mahomet makes uſe of this idea frequently, as figurative of the reſurrection; and in this he ſhews himſelf no leſs of a philoſopher than a poet. Dr. Ruſſel has deſcribed this regeneration of nature in moſt lively colours in his *Natural Hiſtory of Aleppo*, a book which every man ought to read, who wiſhes not only literally to underſtand the Oriental writers, but to feel them. Indeed, for want of this, many ſimiles appear to us bold and unuſual, which among the Orientals have a proper and diſtinct ſignification. CAAB, an Arabic poet, who was contemporary with Mahomet, in one of his poems compares the teeth of a young lady when ſhe ſmiled to wine mixed with water, in which remained bubbles of yeſterday's rain. In Iſaiah there are many alluſions of this nature, the favourable or adverſe ſtate of the

the nations being frequently expreſſed by this image, which many commentators have attempted to explain with more exactneſs than a poetical idea will bear. They have taken what the poet meant figuratively ſometimes in a literal ſenſe; and at other times they have explained every thing in a myſtical manner, and have pretended to define what is meant by the *water*, who are theſe that are *thirſty*, &c. &c. intermingling many very pious reflexions, but utterly foreign to the ſubject, and ſuch as never once entered the mind of the poet. For it certainly was not the intention of the Prophet to write enigmas, but to illuſtrate and adorn the beautiful figure which he introduces. Thus, c. xxxv. 6, 7. ſpeaking of the happy ſtate of Paleſtine, at the time that Idumea was laid waſte and ſubdued:

" The deſert, and the waſte, ſhall be glad;
" And the wilderneſs ſhall rejoice and flouriſh:
" For in the wilderneſs ſhall burſt forth waters,
" And torrents in the deſert:
" And the glowing ſand ſhall become a pool,
" And the thirſty ſoil bubbling ſprings:
" And in the haunt of dragons ſhall ſpring forth
" The graſs, with the reed, and the bulruſh."

It is however to be remarked, that the level ground ſuffers moſt from the intolerable heat, and that the deſerts are almoſt deſtitute of water. He amplifies the ſame image in a different manner in c. xxxv. 17. celebrating the return of the Iſraelites from the Babylonian exile:

" The poor and the needy ſeek for water, and there is none;
" Their tongue is parched with thirſt:
" I Jehovah will anſwer them;
" The God of Iſrael, I will not forſake them.

" I will

" I will open in the high places rivers;
" And in the midſt of valleys, fountains:
" I will make the deſert a ſtanding pool;
" And the dry ground ſtreams of waters.
" In the wilderneſs I will give the cedar;
" The acaſia, the myrtle, and the tree producing oil:
" I will plant the fir-tree in the deſert,
" The pine and the box together."

This is admirable painting, and diſplays a moſt happy boldneſs of invention; the trees of different kinds tranſplanted from their native ſoils to grow together in the deſert; the fir-tree and the pine, which are indigenous to Lebanon, to which ſnow and rain, and an immenſe quantity of moiſture ſeem almoſt eſſential; the olive, which is the native of Jeruſalem; the Egyptian thorn, indigenous to Arabia; both of them requiring a dry ſoil; and the myrtle, which flouriſhes moſt on the ſea-ſhore. The ſame image occurs c. xxxiii. 18—20. but placed in a different light. The poet feigns in this place, that the wild beaſts of the deſert, and the dragons themſelves, which had been afflicted with thirſt, pour forth their nocturnal cries in thankfulneſs to God for ſending rain upon the deſert. See alſo c. xxxiv. 3, 4. Sometimes in the diſtrict of Jeruſalem, which by nature is a very dry ſoil, and in which there are few ſtreams, an immenſe flood is ſeen to burſt forth, and with irreſiſtible violence fall into the Dead Sea, ſo that its water, which is more ſalt than that of any other ſea, is rendered ſweet. Gihon ſeems to have afforded the baſis of the above deſcription, a rivulet which proceeds from Sion, when perhaps ſome uncommon flood had prodigiouſly increaſed it. If I am not miſtaken, David was the firſt who made uſe of this bold figure, but with ſuch a degree of modeſty as becomes the

author

author who firſt introduced it, PSAL. xlvi. 2—6. I ſuſpect ſomething of the kind indeed to have happened about the time of his compoſing that Pſalm, for it is uſual in earthquakes for ſome ſtreams to be entirely drained, while others overflow. But his imitators, in their ardour for novelty, have gone far beyond him. Thus Joel intermingles with this figure the picture of the golden age, c. iii. 18.

" The mountains ſhall drop down new wine,
" And the hills ſhall flow with milk,
" And all the rivers of Judah ſhall flow with water,
" And a fountain ſhall flow from the houſe of Jehovah,
" And ſhall water the valley of Shittim." M.

LEC-

LECTURE VII.

OF POETIC IMAGERY FROM COMMON LIFE.

Examples of poetical imagery from common life—The habits of life extremely ſimple among the Hebrews, whoſe principal employments were agriculture and paſturage—The dignity of theſe employments; and the ſplendour of the imagery which is borrowed from them: Threſhing, and the threſhing inſtruments—The ſublimity of the imagery which is taken from familiar objects reſults from its propriety. The poetic hell of the Hebrews explained; the imagery of which is borrowed from their ſubterraneous ſepulchres and funeral rites.

IN my laſt Lecture I explained three cauſes, which have enabled the Hebrew poets to preſerve in their figurative ſtyle the moſt perfect union between perſpicuity and ſublimity. I remarked in the firſt place, that they chiefly employed images taken from familiar objects, ſuch I mean as were generally known and underſtood; ſecondly, that in the uſe or application of them, they obſerved a regular track, method, or analogy; and laſtly, that they uſed moſt freely that kind of imagery which was moſt familiar, and the application of which was moſt generally underſtood.

derſtood. The truth of theſe obſervations will I think find further and more deciſive confirmation, if thoſe metaphors be conſidered, which are taken from arts, manners, and common life. Theſe, you will eaſily recollect, I before pointed out as another ſource of poetical imagery: and for this part of the ſubject a few general obſervations will ſuffice, with an example or two out of the great number which preſent themſelves in the ſacred writings. The whole courſe and method of common or domeſtic life among the Hebrews of the more ancient times, was ſimple and uniform in the greateſt degree. There exiſted not that variety of ſtudies and purſuits, of arts, conditions, and employments, which may be obſerved among other nations, who boaſt of ſuperior civilization; and rightly, indeed, if luxury, levity, and pride, be the criterions of it. All enjoyed the ſame equal liberty; all of them, as being the offspring of the ſame ancient ſtock, boaſted an equality of lineage and rank; there were no empty titles, no enſigns of falſe glory; ſcarcely any diſtinction or precedence but that which reſulted from ſuperior virtue or conduct, from the dignity of age and experience, or from ſervices ren-

dered to their country. Separated from the reſt of mankind by their religion and laws, and not at all addicted to commerce, they were contented with thoſe arts, which were neceſſary to a ſimple and uncultivated (or rather uncorrupted) ſtate of life. Thus their principal employments were agriculture and the care of cattle; they were a nation of huſbandmen and ſhepherds. The lands had been originally parcelled out to the different families; the portions of which (by the laws of the country) could not be alienated by ſale [1], and therefore deſcended to their poſterity without diminution. The fruits of the earth, the produce of his land and labour, conſtituted the wealth of each individual. Not even the greateſt among them eſteemed it mean and diſgraceful to be employed in the loweſt offices of rural labour. In the Scripture hiſtory, therefore, we read of eminent perſons called to the higheſt and moſt ſacred offices, heroes, kings, and prophets, from the plough and from the ſtalls [2].

[1] Lev. xxv. 13—16, and 23, 24. Compare 1 Kings xxi. 3.

[2] See Jud. iii. 31. vi. 11. 1 Sam. ix. 3. xi. 5. 2 Sam. vii. 8. Pſal. lxxviii. 72, 73. 1 Kings xix. 19, 20. Amos i. 1. vii. 14, 15.

Such

Such being the ſtate of things, we cannot reaſonably be ſurprized to find the Hebrew writers deducing moſt of their metaphors from thoſe arts particularly, in which they were educated from their earlieſt years. We are not to wonder that thoſe objects which were moſt familiar to their ſenſes afforded the principal ornaments of their poetry; eſpecially ſince they furniſhed ſo various and ſo elegant an aſſortment of materials, that not only the beautiful, but the grand and magnificent might be collected from them. If any perſon of more nicety than judgment ſhould eſteem ſome of theſe ruſtic images groveling or vulgar, it may be of ſome uſe to him to be informed, that ſuch an effect can only reſult from the ignorance of the critic, who, through the medium of his ſcanty information and peculiar prejudices, preſumes to eſtimate matters of the moſt remote antiquity [1]; it cannot reaſonably be attri-

[1] One would almoſt think that this keen remark was prophetically levelled at a late critic of a very extraordinary caſt. It was a little unfortunate for that learned gentleman, that theſe Lectures were not *tranſlated* previous to the publication of his book: if they had, he certainly would never have laid himſelf open to the application of ſo pointed a ſarcaſm. T.

buted as an error to the ſacred poets, who not only give to thoſe ideas all their natural force and dignity, but frequently by the vivacity and boldneſs of the figure, exhibit them with additional vigour, ornament, and beauty.

It would be a tedious taſk to inſtance particularly with what embelliſhments of diction, derived from one low and trivial object, (as it may appear to ſome) the barn, or the threſhing-floor, the ſacred writers have contrived to add a luſtre to the moſt ſublime, and a force to the moſt important ſubjects: Thus "JEHOVAH threſhes out the heathen "as corn, tramples them under his feet, "and diſperſes them. He delivers the "nations to Iſrael to be beaten in pieces by "an indented flail [4], or to be cruſhed by "their brazen hoofs. He ſcatters his ene-"mies like chaff upon the mountains [5], "and diſperſes them with the whirlwind of "his indignation [6]."

[4] HAB. iii. 12. JOEL iii. 14. JER. li. 33. ISAI. xxi. 10.

[5] MIC. iv. 13.

[6] PSAL. lxxxiii. 14, 16. ISAI. xvii. 13.

"Behold

" Behold I have made thee a threſhing wain;
" A new corn-drag armed with pointed teeth:
" Thou ſhalt threſh the mountains, and beat
" them ſmall,
" And reduce the hills to chaff.
" Thou ſhalt winnow them, and the wind ſhall
" bear them away;
" And the tempeſt ſhall ſcatter them abroad[7]."

Of theſe quotations it is to be remarked, firſt, that the nature of this metaphor, and the mode of applying it, are conſtantly and cautiouſly regarded by the different authors of the ſacred poems; and on this account, notwithſtanding the boldneſs of it, both chaſtity and perſpicuity are preſerved: ſince they apply it ſolely to exaggerate the ſlaughter and diſperſion of the wicked. The force and aptneſs of the image itſelf in illuſtrating the ſubject, will alſo afford a very proper and ready apology for ſome degree of freedom in the application of it, particularly if we advert to the nature and method of this ruſtic operation in Paleſtine. It was performed in a high ſituation expoſed to the wind, by bruiſing the ear, either by driving in upon

[7] ISAI. xli. 15, 16.

the ſheaves a herd of cattle, or elſe by an inſtrument conſtructed of large planks, and ſharpened underneath with ſtones or iron; and ſometimes by a machine in the form of a cart, with iron wheels or axles indented, which Varro calls *Pœnicum*[8], as being brought to Italy by the Carthaginians from Phœnicia, which was adjacent to Paleſtine. From this it is plain (not to mention that the deſcriptions agree in every particular) that the ſame cuſtom was common both to the Hebrews and the Romans; and yet I do not recollect that the latter have borrowed any of their poetical imagery from this occupation. It is proper, however, to remark, that this image was obvious and familiar to the Hebrews in a high degree, as we learn from what is ſaid of the threſhing-floor of Ornan[9] the Jebuſite, which was ſituated in an open place (as were all the reſt) in Jeruſalem itſelf, and in the higheſt part of the city, in the very place, indeed, where the temple of Solomon was afterwards erected.

Homer, who was uncommonly fond of every picture of rural life, eſteemed that under our conſideration ſo beautiful and ſigni-

[8] *De Re Ruſt.* i. 52. [9] 2 CHRON. iii. 1.

ficant,

ficant, that, in a few inſtances [10], he draws his compariſons from the threſhing-floor (for even he was fearful of the boldneſs of this image in the form of a metaphor). Two of theſe compariſons he introduces to illuſtrate light ſubjects, contrary to the practice of the Hebrews; but the third is employed upon a ſubject truly magnificent, and this, as it approaches in ſome degree the ſublimity of the Hebrew, it may not be improper to recite:

" As with autumnal harveſts cover'd o'er,
" And thick beſtrown, lies Ceres' ſacred floor,
" When round and round, with never-weary'd
" pain,
" The trampling ſteers beat out th' unnumber'd
" grain:
" So the fierce courſers, as the chariot rolls,
" Tread down whole ranks, and cruſh out heroes
" ſouls [11]."

This compariſon, however, though deſervedly accounted one of the grandeſt and moſt beautiful which antiquity has tranſmitted to us, ſtill falls greatly ſhort of the Hebrew boldneſs and ſublimity. A Hebrew writer would have

[10] See *Iliad* v. & xiii. 588. [11] POPE's *Iliad* xx. 577.

compared the hero himſelf with the inſtrument, and not his horſes with the oxen that are harneſſed to it, which is rather too appoſite, and too exactly ſimilar [12]. But cuſtom had not given equal licence to the Greek poetry; this image had not been equally familiar, had not occupied the ſame place as with the Hebrews; nor had acquired the ſame force and authority by long preſcription.

I ought not in this place to omit that ſupremely magnificent delineation of the divine vengeance, expreſſed by imagery taken from the Wine-preſs; an image which very frequently occurs in the ſacred poets, but which no other poetry has preſumed to introduce. But where ſhall we find expreſſions of equal dignity with the original in any modern language? By what art of the pencil can we exhibit even a ſhadow or an outline of that deſcription, in which Iſaiah depicts the Meſſiah as coming to vengeance [13]?

"Who

[12] This will be more fully explained in Lect. XII.

[13] See ISAI. lxiii. 1—3. Our author, in his excellent commentary on Iſaiah, has a very long note, proving againſt ſome learned interpreters (I ſuppoſe Jewiſh) that

Judas

" Who is this that cometh from Edom?
" With garments deeply dyed from Botſra?
" This that is magnificent in his apparel;
" Marching on in the greatneſs of his ſtrength?
" I who publiſh righteouſneſs [14], and am mighty
" to ſave.
" Wherefore is thine apparel red?
" And thy garments, as one that treadeth the
" wine-vat?

Judas Maccabeus could not be the ſubject of this prophecy. He aſſerts very properly that the glorious, but fruitleſs, effort of the Maccabees, was not an event adequate to ſo lofty a prediction: and he adds another very material circumſtance, which he preſumes entirely excludes Judas Maccabeus, and even the Idumeans properly ſo called; for the Idumea of the prophet's time was quite a different country from that which Judas conquered. To the queſtion, " to whom does it then apply?" he anſwers, to no event that he knows of in hiſtory, unleſs perhaps the deſtruction of Jeruſalem and the Jewiſh polity, which in the Goſpel is called the coming of Chriſt, and the days of vengeance. He adds, however, that there are prophecies, which intimate a great ſlaughter of the enemies of God and his people, which remain to be fulfilled: theſe in Ezekiel and in the Revelation are called Gog and Magog, and poſſibly this prophecy may refer to the ſame or the like event. T.

[14] In one manuſcript this word ſtands, " the Anſ nouncer of Righteouſneſs." See Biſhop LOWTH's *Notes on Iſaiah*.

" I have

" I have trodden the vat alone;
" And of the peoples there was not a man with
" me.
" And I trod them in mine anger;
" And I trampled on them in mine indignation;
" And their life-blood was ſprinkled upon my
" garments;
" And I have ſtained all my apparel."

But the inſtances are innumerable which might be quoted of metaphors taken from the manners and cuſtoms of the Hebrews. One general remark, however, may be made upon this ſubject, namely, that from one ſimple, regular, and natural mode of life having prevailed among the Hebrews, it has ariſen, that in their poetry theſe metaphors have leſs of obſcurity, of meanneſs or depreſſion, than could be expected, when we conſider the antiquity of their writings, the diſtance of the ſcene, and the uncommon boldneſs and vivacity of their rhetoric. Indeed, to have made uſe of the boldeſt imagery with the moſt perfect perſpicuity, and the moſt common and familiar with the greateſt dignity, is a commendation almoſt peculiar to the ſacred poets. I ſhall not heſitate to produce an example of this kind, in which the meanneſs

neſs of the image is fully equalled by the plainneſs and inelegance of the expreſſion; and yet ſuch is its conſiſtency, ſuch the propriety of its application, that I do not ſcruple to pronounce it ſublime. The Almighty threatens the ultimate deſtruction of Jeruſalem in theſe terms:

" And I will wipe Jeruſalem,
" As a man wipeth a diſh:
" He wipeth it, and turneth it upſide down[15]."

But many of theſe images muſt falſly appear mean and obſcure to us, who differ ſo materially from the Hebrews in our manners and cuſtoms: but in ſuch caſes it is our duty neither too raſhly to blame, nor too ſuddenly to deſpair. The mind ſhould rather exert itſelf to diſcover, if poſſible, the connexion between the literal and the figurative meanings, which, in abſtruſe ſubjects, frequently depending upon ſome very delicate and nice relation, eludes our penetration. An obſolete cuſtom, for inſtance, or ſome forgotten circumſtance, opportunely adverted to, will ſometimes reſtore its true perſpicuity

[15] 2 KINGS xxi. 13. This is the anſwer of ſome prophet as related by the hiſtorian.

and

and credit to a very intricate paſſage. Whether the inſtance I have at preſent in view may prove of any utility or not in this reſpect, I will not preſume to ſay; it may poſſibly, however, ſerve to illuſtrate ſtill further the nature of the Hebrew imagery, and the accuracy of their poets in the application of it.

Either through choice or neceſſity, the infernal regions and the ſtate of the dead has been a very common topic with the poets of every nation; and this difficult ſubject, which the moſt vigorous underſtanding is unable to fathom by any exertion of reaſon, and of which conjecture itſelf can ſcarcely form any adequate idea, they have ornamented with all the ſplendour of deſcription, as one of the moſt important themes which could engage the human imagination. Thus the prompt and fertile genius of the Greeks, naturally adapted to the fabulous [16], has eagerly

[16] I fear our Author, who is not a little indebted to the Greeks, is rather unjuſtly ſevere upon them in this paſſage. The Infernal Regions of the Greeks, which probably they borrowed from the Egyptians, I have little doubt flowed from the very ſame ſource, and the ſeat of the ſoul was ſuppoſed to be under the earth, becauſe the body was depoſited there. Neither can it be denied that the

eagerly embraced the opportunity to indulge in all the wantonneſs of fiction, and has peopled

the Hebrew poets alſo feigned a ſort of ſociety or civil community of the departed ſouls, which without a doubt was utterly fabulous: though we have none of their authors remaining, who deſcribe the fiction in terms equally preciſe with the Heathen writers, and preſume

"Pandere res alta terra & caligine merſas."

They have, moreover, their Elyſium, their Styx, &c. of which I ſhall remark in the notes on Lecture IX. Nor is ſuch a degree of fable inconſiſtent with poetry even of the moſt ſacred kind; for though it be not exactly and literally true, it is yet very far from falſhood. Nay, I find the Hebrew poets more licentious in ſome reſpects as to this matter, than even the Latin or the Greek: for they not only ſuppoſe the human ſouls to deſcend to the infernal regions, but thoſe of trees, and even of kingdoms, ISA. xiv. 9—20. EZEK. xxxi. 14, 16, 17, 18. xxxii. (where not only they who were ſlain in battle are ſuppoſed to deſcend to the infernal regions, but the whole army of the vanquiſhed, and the very kingdom itſelf.) This very bold figure is ſo uſual in the Hebrew writings, that it has been introduced into their proſe compoſition; and Chriſt, when he foretels the eternal duration of his Church, ſays, "the Gates of Hell," or the *Kingdom* or Power of Hell, "ſhall not prevail againſt it." M.

I muſt caution the reader, in this place, againſt the enthuſiaſm of our Annotator for the ancient learning, and particularly for that of Egypt. In this favourite purſuit, of finding out all the Grecian mythology in the Scriptures,

peopled the infernal regions with ſuch a profuſion of monſters, as could not fail to promote the ridicule even of the ignorant and the vulgar [17]. The conduct of the Hebrews has been very different; their fancy was reſtrained upon this ſubject by the tenets of their religion; and (notwithſtanding the firm perſuaſion of the exiſtence not only of the ſoul but of the body after death) we are to remember they were equally ignorant with the reſt of mankind of the actual ſtate and

tures, he is certainly not leſs viſionary than thoſe commentators, whoſe indiſcreet zeal he has on other occaſions ſo ably expoſed. That the Hebrew poets have made uſe of poetical ornaments, or fictions, on many occaſions, I am willing to admit; and that theſe ſhould bear ſome remote reſemblance to the poetical ornaments of other nations, is natural enough to ſuppoſe; but it is only ſuch a general reſemblance as will frequently occur in writers who treat of the ſame ſubjects. For inſtance, it is a very natural fiction to place the reſidence of the ſoul after death beneath the earth, and the aſſociation which led to this notion was certainly, as our Author obſerves, the body's being depoſited there: but there is not the leaſt occaſion to recur to the Egyptian rites for this ſimple and eaſy fiction. The other inſtances which our Annotator attempts to produce are very fanciful, as I ſhall demonſtrate in the proper place. T.

[17] See CICERO *Quæſt. Tuſculan.* 1. 5, 6.

ſituation

ſituation of the dead. In this caſe they have acted as in every other: what was plain and commonly underſtood concerning the dead, that is, what happened to the body ſuggeſted the general imagery to which the Hebrews always reſort in deſcribing the ſtate and condition of departed ſouls, and in forming what may be termed, if the expreſſion be allowable, their poetical Hell. It is called SHEOL by the Hebrews themſelves, by the Greeks HADES, and by the Latins INFERNUM, or SEPULCHRUM. Into the funeral rites, or ceremonies of the Hebrews may be traced all the imagery which their poets introduce to illuſtrate this ſubject; and it muſt be confeſſed that theſe afforded ample ſcope for poetical embelliſhment. The ſepulchres of the Hebrews, at leaſt thoſe of reſpectable perſons, and thoſe which hereditarily belonged to the principal families, were extenſive caves, or vaults [13], excavated from the native rock by art and manual labour. The roofs of them in general were arched;

[13] See GEN. xxiii. 2 KINGS xiii. 21. ISAI. xxii. 16. 2 CHRON. xvi. 14. JOSH. x. 27. LAM. iii. 53. JOHN xi. 38. and the Evangeliſts concerning the Sepulchre of Chriſt.

and

and ſome were ſo ſpacious as to be ſupported by colonades. All round the ſides were cells for the reception of the Sarcophagi; theſe were properly ornamented with ſculpture, and each was placed in its proper cell. The cave or ſepulchre admitted no light, being cloſed by a great ſtone, which was rolled to the mouth of the narrow paſſage or entrance. Many of theſe receptacles are ſtill extant in Judea: two in particular are more magnificent than all the reſt [19], and are ſuppoſed to

[19] See a deſcription of theſe Sepulchres, SERLIO *Architettura*, L. iii. VILLALPANDUS *Apparat. Urb.* iii. 16. MAUNDRELL's *Travels*, p. 76.

Joſephus makes frequent mention of the Sepulchre of David. He calls the Sepulchre itſelf ταφος or μνημα; and the chambers, into many of which the Sepulchre was divided, οικους των εν τοις μνημασι; the cells θηκας. *Antiq.* vii. 15. xv. 7. *Bell.* i. 2. The Sepulchres of the Egyptian monarchs are deſcribed by STRABO, Lib. xvii. "About forty "cells are cut in the caves." Of the remains of which ſee a deſcription, POCOCK's *Deſcription of the Eaſt*, B. ii. c. 3. There are ſtill remaining at Naples certain ſepulchral vaults called *Catacombs*, which have not been exceeded in grandeur by any ſimilar work of man. They appear to me, indeed, to be a monument of the moſt remote antiquity, which, though originally appropriated to ſome other uſe, about the Chriſtian æra were made uſe of as burial-places. They are evidently of the ſame kind with

to be the ſepulchres of the kings. One of theſe is in Jeruſalem, and contains twenty-four

with other ſubterraneous works of that country, many of which have been deſtroyed by earthquakes, but many remain at this day at Cumæ, Miſenum, Baiæ, the Lake of Averno, and Mount Poſilypo. I have no doubt but that theſe works were antecedent to the time of Homer, who deſcribes them as inhabited by the Cimmerians, a people who live in perpetual darkneſs, *Odyſſ.* ix. ſub init. as Ephorus in STRABO, *Lib.* 5. ſays of them, "that they "live in certain ſubterraneous dwellings, which they call "*Argillas*, and aſſociate with one another by narrow "foſſes or paſſages;" and the remaining monuments demonſtrate this account not to be altogether fabulous. Theſe caves are called *Argillas*, from the nature of the ſoil in which I believe they are uſually dug. "*Argil*, or "that kind of earth which is uſed for cleanſing, or white "clay," HESYCH. whence a hill between Puteoli and Naples was called *Leucogæus*, PLIN. *Nat. Hiſt.* viii. 11. although thoſe mentioned above are all hewn out of the ſolid grit, in order to reſiſt the injuries of time. Hence *Argiletum*, the name of a ſtreet in Rome, taken from ſome *Argil* of this kind, ſuch as formed the cave of Cacus, which was not far from that ſtreet; though Virgil does not favour this opinion; ſee however VARRO *De Ling. Lat.* Lib. iv. It is evident that Homer firſt, and Virgil after him, derived their notions of the infernal regions from theſe Cimmerian caves of Campania; and when Virgil is deſcribing the cave of Cacus, when forced open by Hercules, the image of the infernal ſtate immediately occurs:

four cells; the other, containing twice that number, is in a place without the city.

If, therefore, we examine all thoſe paſſages, in which the ſacred writers have poetically deſcribed the infernal regions, we may, if I miſtake not, clearly perceive them intent upon this gloomy picture, which their mode of ſepulture preſented to their view. That which ſtruck their ſenſes they delineated in their deſcriptions: we there find no exact account, no explicit mention of immortal ſpirits; not, according to the notion of ſome learned perſons [20], becauſe they diſbelieved in the exiſtence of the ſoul after death, but becauſe they had no clear idea or perception by which they might explain where or in

" The court of Cacus ſtands reveal'd to ſight,
" The cavern glares with new-admitted light.
" So pent the vapours with a rumbling ſound
" Heave from below, and rend the hollow ground:
" A ſounding flaw ſucceeds: and from on high,
" The Gods with hate beheld the nether ſky:
" The ghoſts repine at violated right;
" And curſe th' invading ſun; and ſicken at the ſight."
DRYDEN's *Virg.* Æn. viii. 321.
Author's Note.

[20] See LE CLERC *Comment. Hagiographa:* conſult the Index for the word *Immortalitas.*

what

what manner it exiſted; and they were not poſſeſſed of that ſubtilty of language, which enables men to ſpeak with plauſibility on ſubjects abſtruſe, and remote from the apprehenſion of the ſenſes, and to cover their ignorance with learned diſputation. The condition, the form, the habitation of departed ſpirits were therefore concealed from the Hebrews equally with the reſt of mankind. Nor did revelation afford them the ſmalleſt aſſiſtance on this ſubject; not, perhaps, becauſe the divine Providence was diſpoſed to withhold this information from them, but becauſe the preſent condition of the human mind renders it incapable of receiving it. For when the underſtanding contemplates things diſtinct from body and matter, from the want of juſt ideas, it is compelled to have recourſe to ſuch as are falſe and fictitious, and to delineate the incorporeal world by things corporeal and terreſtrial. Thus, obſerving that after death the body returned to the earth, and that it was depoſited in a ſepulchre, after the manner which has juſt been deſcribed, a ſort of popular notion prevailed among the Hebrews, as well as among other nations, that the life

which ſucceeded the preſent was to be paſſed beneath the earth: and to this notion even the ſacred prophets were obliged to allude occaſionally, if they wiſhed to be underſtood by the people on this ſubject.

Hence the meaning is evident, when the deceaſed are ſaid to "deſcend into the pit [21], "to the nether parts of the earth, to the "gates and chambers of death, to the ſtony "places, to the ſides, to the gates of the "caverns;" when it is ſaid, "that the grave "has ſwallowed them up, and cloſed its "mouth upon them [22];" that "they lie "down in the deep [23]; immerſed in a deſert "place, in the gulph, in thick darkneſs, in "the land of darkneſs and the ſhadow of "death, wild, hideous, where all is diſorder

[21] שחת, alſo בור, or בארות, Job xxxiii. 18. Psal. xxviii. 1. & paſſim. ארץ תחתית, or ארץ תחתיות, Ezek. xxxi. 14. xxxii. 18. & Psal. paſſim. שערי שאול, Isai. xxxviii. 10. מות שערי, Job xxxviii. 17. Psal. ix. 14. חדרי מות, Prov. vii. 27. אבני בור, Isai. xiv. 19. יקתי בור, Isai. xiv. 15. Ezek. xxxii. 23. כדי שאול, Job xvii. 16.

[22] פי שאול, Psal. cxli. 7. פי באר, Psal. lxix. 16. See alſo Isai. v. 14.

[23] מצולה, Psal. lxix. 16. lxxxviii. 7. חרבות, Job iii. 14. Ezek. xxvi. 20.

"and

" and darkneſs: and darkneſs, as it were, " inſtead of light diffuſeth its beams [24]."

The poets of other nations, amidſt all their fictions, have yet retained a congenial picture of the habitations of the dead: Thus the tragic poet has admirably deſcribed the deep courſe of Acheron:

Thro' dreary caves cut in the rugged rock,
Where reigns the darkneſs of perpetual hell [25]."

But how grand and magnificent a ſcene is depicted by the Hebrew poets from the ſame materials, in which their deceaſed heroes and kings are ſeen to advance from the earth! Figure to yourſelves a vaſt, dreary, dark, ſepulchral cavern [26], where the kings of the nations lie, each upon his bed of duſt [27], the arms of each beſide him, his ſword under his head [28], and the graves of their numerous

[24] I remember, though I cannot refer to the paſſage, ſome Arabian writer conſiders the nocturnal darkneſs as an emanation from an opaque body, juſt as the light of day proceeds from the ſun. S. H.

[25] CIC. *Tuſc. Quæſt.* 1.

[26] ISAI. xiv. 9, 18. EZEK. xxxii. 19, 21, &c.

[27] משכב ISAI. lvii. 2. EZEK. xxxii. 25. ἡ θηκη, the cell which receives the ſarcophagus.

[28] EZEK. xxxii. 27. See 1 MACC. xiii. 29.

hoſts round about them [29]: Behold! the king of Babylon is introduced, they all riſe and go forth to meet him; and receive him as he approaches! "Art thou alſo come down "unto us? Art thou become like unto us? "Art thou cut down and withered in thy "ſtrength, O thou deſtroyer of the na-"tions!"—But I reluctantly refrain.—It is not for me, nor indeed for human ability, to explain theſe ſubjects with a becoming dignity. You will ſee this tranſcendent imagery, yourſelves, better and more completely diſplayed in that triumphal ſong, which was compoſed by Iſaiah [30] (the firſt of all poets for ſublimity and elegance) previous to the death of the king of Babylon. Ezekiel [31] alſo has nobly illuſtrated the ſame ſcene, with ſimilar machinery, in the laſt prophecy concerning the fall of Pharoah; that remarkable example of the terrific, which is indeed deſervedly accounted the peculiar excellence of this Prophet.

[29] EZEK. xxxii. 22, 23, 24.

[30] ISAI. xiv. 4—27. [31] EZEK. xxxii. 18—32.

LEC-

LECTURE VIII.

OF POETIC IMAGERY FROM SACRED TOPICS.

Imagery, which is borrowed from the rites and ceremonies of religion, peculiarly liable to obſcurity and miſtake—Inſtances of expreſſions, which appear uncommonly harſh; and of others, the principal elegance of which would be loſt, unleſs we adverted to the nature of the ſacred rites—The exordium of the hundred and fourth Pſalm explained.

THE preſent diſquiſition concerning the poetical imagery of the Hebrews was undertaken, Gentlemen, principally with a view of guarding you againſt an error, which is apt to miſlead thoſe who peruſe without ſufficient attention and information writings of ſo old a date; namely, that of accounting vulgar, mean, or obſcure, paſſages which were probably accounted among the moſt perſpicuous and ſublime by the people to whom they were addreſſed. Now, if with reſpect even to that imagery, which is borrowed from objects of nature, and of common life, (of which we have juſt been treating) ſuch a caution was proper, it will ſurely be ſtill more neceſſary with reſpect to that

which is borrowed from the ſacred myſteries of religion. For though much of that imagery which was taken by the Hebrew writers from the general face of nature, or from the cuſtoms of common life, was peculiar to their own country, yet much, it muſt be confeſſed, was equally familiar to the reſt of the world; but that, which was ſuggeſted by the rites and ceremonies of religion, was altogether peculiar to themſelves, and was but little known beyond the limits of Judea. Since, therefore, this topic in particular ſeems to involve many ſuch difficulties and inconveniencies, it appears to me deſerving of a ſerious inveſtigation; and ſuch inveſtigation, I flatter myſelf, will tend to reſtore in ſome degree the real majeſty of the Hebrew poetry, which ſeems to have ſhone forth in former times with no ordinary ſplendour.

The religion of the Hebrews embraced a very extenſive circle of divine and human economy. It not only included all that regarded the worſhip of God; it extended even to the regulation of the commonwealth, the ratification of the laws, the forms and adminiſtration of juſtice, and almoſt all the relations of civil and domeſtic life. With them

almoſt

almoſt every point of conduct was connected either directly or indirectly with their religion. Things which were held leaſt in eſteem by other nations, bore among them the ſanction of divine authority, and had a very cloſe alliance with both the more ſerious concerns of life and the ſacred ceremonies. On theſe accounts it happens in the firſt place, that abundance of metaphors occur in the Hebrew poetry deduced from ſacred ſubjects; and further, that there is a neceſſity for the moſt diligent obſervation, leſt that very connexion with the affairs of religion ſhould eſcape us. For ſhould we be miſtaken in ſo material a point; ſhould we erroneouſly account as common or profane what is in its nature divine; or ſhould we rank among the mean and the vulgar, ſentiments and images which are ſacred and ſublime; it is incredible how much the ſtrength of the language, and the force and majeſty of the ideas, will be deſtroyed. Nothing in nature, indeed, can be ſo conducive to the ſublime, as thoſe conceptions which are ſuggeſted by the contemplation of the greateſt of all beings; and when the auguſt form of Religion preſents itſelf to the mental eye,

A ſer-

A fervent pleaſure, and an awe divine
Seizes the ſoul, and lifts it to its God.

It follows therefore of courſe, that the dignity of the Hebrew poetry muſt in ſome meaſure be diminiſhed in our eyes, ſince not only the connexion of the imagery with ſacred things muſt frequently eſcape our obſervation, but even when it is moſt apparent, it can ſcarcely ſtrike us with that force and vivacity with which it muſt have penetrated the minds of the Hebrews. The whole ſyſtem of the Hebrew rites is one great and complicated allegory, to the ſtudy and obſervance of which all poſſible diligence and attention were inceſſantly dedicated by thoſe who were employed in the ſacred offices. On this occupation and ſtudy, therefore, all good and conſiderate men were intent; it conſtituted all their buſineſs, all their amuſement; it was their treaſure and their hope; on this every care and every thought was employed; and the utmoſt ſanctity and reverence diſtinguiſhed every part of their conduct which had any relation to it. Much dignity and ſublimity muſt alſo have reſulted from the recollection, which theſe alluſions produced, of the ſplendour and magnificence of the ſacred

cred rites themſelves; the force of which upon the minds of thoſe who had frequent opportunities of obſerving them muſt have been incredible. Such a ſolemn grandeur attended theſe rites, eſpecially after the building of Solomon's temple, that although we are poſſeſſed of very accurate deſcriptions, our imaginations are ſtill utterly unable to embody them. Many alluſions, therefore, of this kind, which the Hebrew poets found particularly energetic, and highly popular among their countrymen, may poſſibly appear to us mean and contemptible; ſince many things which were held by them in the higheſt veneration, are by us but little regarded, or perhaps but little underſtood.

I ſhall ſubjoin a few examples of what I have juſt been remarking; or rather I ſhall point out a few topics, which will of themſelves ſuggeſt a variety of examples.

Much of the Jewiſh law is employed in diſcriminating between things clean and unclean; in removing, and making atonement for things polluted or preſcribed: and under theſe ceremonies, as under a veil or covering, a meaning the moſt important and ſacred is concealed, as would be apparent from the nature

nature of them, even if we had not beſides, other clear and explicit authority for this opinion. Among the reſt are certain diſeaſes and infirmities of the body, and ſome cuſtoms evidently in themſelves indifferent: theſe, on a curſory view, ſeem light and trivial; but when the reaſons of them are properly explored, they are found to be of conſiderable importance. We are not to wonder, therefore, if the ſacred poets ſometimes have recourſe to theſe topics for imagery, even on the moſt momentous occaſions, when they diſplay the general depravity inherent in the human mind [1], or exprobrate the corrupt manners of their own people [2], or when they deplore the abject ſtate of the virgin, the daughter of Sion, polluted and expoſed [3]. If we conſider theſe metaphors without any reference to the religion of their authors, they will doubtleſs appear in ſome degree diſguſting and inelegant; if we refer them to their genuine ſource, to the peculiar rites of the Hebrews, they will be found wanting neither in force nor in dignity. Of the ſame nature, or at leaſt analogous to them, are

[1] ISAI. lxiv. 6. [2] ISAI. i. 5, 6, 16. EZEK. xxxvi. 17.
[3] LAM. i. 8, 9, 17. and ii. 2.

thoſe

thoſe ardent expreſſions of grief and miſery, which are poured forth by the royal prophet (who, indeed, in many of thoſe divine compoſitions perſonates a character far more exalted than his own); eſpecially when he complains, that he is waſted and conſumed with the loathſomeneſs of diſeaſe, and bowed down and depreſſed with a burden of ſin too heavy for human nature to ſuſtain *. On reading theſe paſſages, ſome, who were but little acquainted with the genius of the Hebrew poetry, have pretended to inquire into the nature of the diſeaſe with which the poet was affected; not leſs abſurdly, in my opinion, than if they had perplexed themſelves to diſcover in what river he was plunged, when he complains that "the deep waters "had gone over his ſoul."

But as there are many paſſages in the Hebrew poets, which may ſeem to require a ſimilar defence, ſo there are in all probability many, which, although they now appear to abound in beauties and elegancies, would yet be thought much more ſublime, were they illuſtrated from thoſe ſacred rites to which they allude; and, as excellent pic-

* See PSAL. xxxviii.

tures,

tures, viewed in their proper light. To this purpoſe many inſtances might be produced from one topic, namely, from the precious and magnificent ornaments of the prieſt's attire. Such was the gracefulneſs, ſuch the magnificence of the ſacerdotal veſtments, eſpecially thoſe of the high-prieſt; ſo adapted were they, as Moſes ſays [5], to the expreſſion of glory and of beauty, that to thoſe, who were impreſſed with an equal opinion of the ſanctity of the wearer, nothing could poſſibly appear more venerable and ſublime. To theſe, therefore, we find frequent alluſions in the Hebrew poets, when they have occaſion to deſcribe extraordinary beauty or comelineſs, or to delineate the perfect form of ſupreme Majeſty. The elegant Iſaiah [6] has a moſt beautiful idea of this kind, when he deſcribes in his own peculiar manner (that is, moſt magnificently) the exultation and glory of the Church, after its triumphal reſtoration. Purſuing the alluſion, he decorates her with the veſtments of ſalvation, and clothes her in the robe of righteouſneſs. He afterwards compares the Church to a

[5] EXOD. xxviii. 2. See ECCLUS l. 5—13.

[6] ISAI. lxi. 10.

bride-

bridegroom dreſſed for the marriage, to which compariſon incredible dignity is added by the word *Ikohen*, a metaphor plainly taken from the apparel of the prieſts, the force of which, therefore, no modern language can expreſs. No imagery, indeed, which the Hebrew writers could employ, was equally adapted with this to the diſplay (as far as the human powers can conceive or depict the ſubject) of the infinite majeſty of God. "JEHOVAH" is therefore introduced by the Pſalmiſt, as "clothed with glory and with ſtrength [7]," he is "girded with power [8];" which are the very terms appropriated to the deſcribing of the dreſs and ornaments of the prieſts.

Thus far may appear plain and indiſputable; but, if I miſtake not, there are other paſſages, the beauty of which lies ſtill more remote from common obſervation. In that moſt perfect ode, which celebrates the immenſity of the Omnipreſent Deity, and the wiſdom of the divine Artificer in forming the human body, the author uſes a metaphor derived from the moſt ſubtile art of the Phrygian workman:

[7] PSAL. xciii. 1. [8] PSAL. lxv. 7.

"When

" When I was formed in the ſecret place,
" *When* I was wrought with a needle in the
" depths of the earth [9]."

Whoever obſerves this, (in truth he will not be able to obſerve it in the common tranſlations) and at the ſame time reflects upon the wonderful mechaniſm of the human body, the various implications of the veins, arteries, fibres, and membranes; the " un-" deſcribable texture" of the whole fabric; may, indeed, feel the beauty and gracefulneſs of this well-adapted metaphor, but will miſs much of its force and ſublimity, unleſs he be apprized that the art of deſigning in needle-work was wholly dedicated to the uſe of the ſanctuary, and, by a direct precept of the divine law, chiefly employed in furniſhing a part of the ſacerdotal habit [10], and the veils for the entrance of the tabernacle. Thus, the poet compares the wiſdom of the divine Artificer with the moſt eſtimable of human arts, that art which was dignified by being conſecrated altogether to the uſe of religion; and the workmanſhip of which was ſo ex-

[9] Psal. cxxxix. 15. [10] Exod. xxviii. 39. xxvi. 36. xxvii. 16. Compare Ezek. xvi. 10, 13, 18.

quiſite,

quiſite, that even the ſacred writings ſeem to attribute it to a ſupernatural guidance [11].

I will inſtance alſo another topic, which, if I am not deceived, will ſuggeſt ſeveral remarkable examples to this purpoſe. There is one of the Hebrew poems, which has been long ſince diſtinguiſhed by univerſal approbation; the ſubject is the wiſdom and deſign of the Creator in the formation of the univerſe: you will eaſily perceive that I have in view the hundred and fourth Pſalm. The exordium is moſt ſublime, and conſiſts of a delineation of the divine Majeſty and power, as exemplified in the admirable conſtitution of nature. On this ſubject, ſince it is abſolutely neceſſary to employ figurative language, the poet has introduced ſuch metaphors as were accounted by the Hebrews the moſt magnificent and moſt worthy; for all of them are, in my opinion, borrowed from the Tabernacle: but I find it will be neceſſary to quote the paſſage itſelf, and I ſhall endeavour to explain it as briefly as poſſible.

The poet firſt expreſſes his ſenſe of the greatneſs and power of the Deity in plain and familiar language; and then breaks out in metaphor:

[11] See EXOD. xxxv. 30—35.

« Thou art inveſted with majeſty and glory:"

Where obſerve the word *labaſh* (to *inveſt*) is the word always uſed to expreſs the ceremony of putting on the ſacerdotal ornaments.

« Covering thyſelf with light as with a garment:"

The Light in the Holy of Holies, the manifeſt ſymbol of the divine Preſence, is figured under this idea [18]; and this ſingular example is

[18] See EXOD. xl. 34—38. LEV. xvi. 2. NUMB. ix. 15, 16. 1 KINGS viii. 10, 11. 2 CHRON. vii. 1, 2. A ſimilar alluſion ISAI. iv. 5. lx. 2, 19. ZECH. ii. 5. REV. xxi. 23. *Author's Note.*

I do not know upon what authority our Author has received this fact. The Rabbies, who talk much about the *Shechina*, could not poſſibly be witneſſes of that ſight, which they themſelves confeſs had diſappeared for many ages before their time, and had never been ſeen in the ſecond temple. Who, indeed, that is acquainted with the rules which ſound reaſon dictates, and which all who ſtudy hiſtory muſt regard, will give credit, in a matter of ſo great antiquity, to witneſſes, whoſe faculty in fabricating falſhood has been ſo frequently expoſed, and eſpecially as they themſelves confeſs, that they do not report the fact upon the authority of any books or records, but merely upon the tradition of their anceſtors? and no man can be ignorant how much ſuch a notion is likely to increaſe in the different hands through which it paſſes. In reality, I do not ſuppoſe our Author took up the matter upon their repreſentation, but that he founded his opinion upon

is made uſe of figuratively to expreſs the univerſal and ineffable glory of God.

" Stretching out the heavens as a curtain :"

Jeringnah is the word made uſe of, and is the very name of thoſe curtains, with which the Tabernacle was covered at the top and round about [13]. The Seventy ſeem to have had this in view, when they render it ὡσει δερριν (as a ſkin) [14]: whence the Vulgate *ſicut*

upon the paſſage in LEVIT. xvi. 2. which, however, the learned Thaleman has aſſerted, is not to be underſtood of a miraculous *Shechina*, but of a cloud of ſmoke, which ſurrounded the throne conſecrated to the Deity, leſt the vacant ſeat ſhould be expoſed to the multitude. From the 13th verſe of the ſame chapter the ſame author argues, that the cloud upon the mercy-ſeat was factitious, or aroſe from the incenſe which was offered there; though I cannot ſay that I am ſo entirely of his opinion as to believe, that not even upon the ſolemn day of inauguration, a cloud of a miraculous nature reſted on the Cherubims. Unleſs, therefore, we interpret this paſſage of the Pſalmiſt, as intimating that God is the fountain of all light, I would refer it to that part of the hiſtory of creation, which relates the firſt great diſplay of Almighty power. M.

[13] I do not ſee why we ſhould ſuppoſe the compariſon to relate to the tabernacle of Moſes more than to any other ſuperb fabric of that kind. M.

[14] Compare EXOD. xxvi. 7, &c. with the SEPTUAGINT.

pellem (which is a literal tranſlation of the Septuagint); and another of the old tranſlators δερμα (a hide or ſkin).

" Laying the beams of his chambers in the
" waters:"

In theſe words the poet admirably expreſſes the nature of the air, which, from various and floating elements, is formed into one regular and uniform maſs, by a metaphor drawn from the ſingular conſtruction of the Tabernacle: for it conſiſted of many different parts, which might be eaſily ſeparated, but which were united by a curious and artful junction and adaptation to each other [15]. He proceeds:

" Making the clouds his chariot;
" Walking upon the wings of the wind:"

[15] It is very evident, that if this obſervation of our Author prove any thing, it proves that any raftered building may be compared to the air. For my own part I am certain, that in this paſſage there is no alluſion at all to the tabernacle, in which there was no *cœnaculum*, or upper chamber, but rather to the houſes in Paleſtine, at the top of which there was a *cœnaculum*, or chamber, apart from the reſt, for the ſake of retirement, which has been very accurately deſcribed by SHAW. M.

He

He had before exhibited the divine Majeſty under the appearance which it aſſumed in the Holy of Holies, that of a bright and dazzling light: he now deſcribes it according to that which it aſſumed, when God accompanied the ark in the pillar of a cloud, which was carried along through the atmoſphere. That vehicle of the divine Preſence is, indeed, diſtinguiſhed in the ſacred hiſtory by the particular appellation of *a chariot* [16].

" Making the winds his meſſengers,
" And his miniſters a flaming fire:"

The elements are deſcribed as prompt and ready in executing the commands of JEHOVAH, as angels, meſſengers, or miniſters ſerving at the Tabernacle, the Hebrew word being exactly expreſſive of the latter ſenſe.

" Who founded the earth upon its baſes:"

The following phraſe alſo is directly taken from the ſame:

" That it ſhould not be diſplaced for more than
" ages:"

[16] 1 CHRON. xxviii. 18. See alſo ECCLUS xlix. 8.

That is, "for a certain period known only "to the infinite wiſdom of God." As the ſituation of both was in this reſpect nearly the ſame, ſo, on the other hand, the permanence of the ſanctuary is in other places compared, and in almoſt the ſame words, with the ſtability of the earth [17].

Perhaps, in purſuing this inveſtigation with ſo much ſubtilty and minuteneſs, I have ſcarcely acted conſiſtently with the cuſtoms of this place, or the nature of my deſign: but it appeared abſolutely neceſſary ſo to do, in order to make myſelf perfectly underſtood; and to demonſtrate, that it is ſcarcely, or not at all, poſſible for any tranſlation fully to repreſent the genuine ſenſe of the ſacred poets, and that delicate connexion which for the moſt part exiſts between their poetical imagery, and the peculiar circumſtances of their nation [18]. This connexion frequently depends

[17] PSAL. lxxviii. 69.

[18] It may be aſſerted of tranſlations in general, and I am ſure I have experienced the truth of the obſervation in this very attempt, that many of the minuter beauties of ſtyle are neceſſarily loſt; a tranſlator is ſcarcely allowed to intrude upon his author any figures or images of his own, and many which appear in the original muſt be omitted

depends upon the uſe of certain terms, upon a certain aſſociation between words and things, which a tranſlation generally perplexes, and very frequently deſtroys. This, therefore, is not to be preſerved in the moſt literal and accurate verſion, much leſs in any poetical tranſlation, or rather imitation; though there are extant ſome not unſucceſsful attempts of this kind. To reliſh completely all the excellencies of the Hebrew literature, the fountains themſelves muſt be approached, the peculiar flavour of which cannot be conveyed by aqueducts, or indeed by any exertion of modern art.

omitted of courſe. Metaphors, ſynecdoches, and metonymies, are frequently untractable; the correſponding words would probably in a figurative ſenſe appear harſh or obſcure. The obſervation, however, applies with leſs juſtice to our common verſion of the Bible than to any tranſlation whatever. It was made in a very early ſtage of our literature, and when the language was by no means formed: in ſuch a ſtate of the language, the figurative diction of the Hebrews might be literally rendered without violence to the national taſte; and the frequent recurrence of the ſame images and expreſſions ſerves to familiarize them to us. Time and habit have now given it force and authority; and I believe there never was an inſtance of any tranſlation, ſo very literal and exact, being read with ſuch univerſal ſatisfaction and pleaſure. T.

LECTURE IX.

OF POETIC IMAGERY FROM THE SACRED HISTORY.

The imagery from the ſacred hiſtory is the moſt luminous and evident of all—The peculiar nature of this kind of metaphor explained, as uſed by the Hebrew poets—The order of the topics which commonly furniſh them: the Chaos and Creation; the Deluge; the Deſtruction of Sodom; the emigration of the Iſraelites from Egypt; the deſcent of God upon Mount Sinai—This ſpecies of metaphor excellently adapted to the ſacred poetry, and particularly to the prophetic; not eaſy to form any compariſon between the ſacred and profane poetry in this reſpect.

FOUR diſtinct claſſes of imagery having been ſpecified as capable of being introduced in a metaphorical form into the poetry of the Hebrews, the laſt of theſe, or that which is ſuggeſted by the more remarkable tranſactions recorded in the ſacred hiſtory, now remains to be examined. Here, however, ſince the nature of the ſubject differs in ſome degree from the former objects of our inveſtigation, ſo the manner of treating it muſt be alſo different. The principal

deſign

deſign of our late diſquiſition was, by conſidering the circumſtances, cuſtoms, opinions, and ſentiments of the Hebrews, to facilitate our approach to the interiour beauties of their poetry; and, by duly examining the nature of the circumſtances, to eſtimate more properly the force and power of each; to diſpel as much as poſſible the miſts of antiquity; to reſtore their native perſpicuity to ſuch paſſages as appear obſcure, their native agreeableneſs to ſuch as now inſpire us with ſentiments of diſguſt, their proper allurement and elegance to thoſe which ſeem harſh and vulgar, and their original dignity to thoſe which the changeableneſs of cuſtom has rendered contemptible or mean. In this diviſion of our ſubject, on the contrary, but little will occur either difficult or obſcure; nothing which will ſeem to require explication or defence: all will be at once perſpicuous, ſplendid, and ſublime. Sacred hiſtory illuminates this claſs of imagery with its proper light, and renders it ſcarcely leſs conſpicuous to us than to the Hebrews themſelves. There is, indeed, this difference, that to the Hebrews the objects of theſe alluſions were all national

tional and domeſtic; and the power of them in moving or delighting the mind was of courſe proportionably greater; nay, frequently, the very place, the ſcene of action, certain traces, and expreſs tokens of ſo many miracles lying before their eyes, muſt have increaſed the effect. To us, on the other hand, however we may hold theſe facts in veneration, however great and ſtriking they may be in themſelves, the diſtance of time and place muſt of neceſſity render them leſs intereſting.

The manner in which theſe metaphors are formed is well deſerving of obſervation, and is in fact as follows. In deſcribing or embelliſhing illuſtrious actions, or future events of a miraculous nature, the Hebrew poets are accuſtomed to introduce alluſions to the actions of former times, ſuch as poſſeſs a conſpicuous place in their hiſtory; and thus they illuminate with colours, foreign, indeed, but ſimilar, the future by the paſt, the recent by the antique, facts leſs known by others more generally underſtood: and as this property ſeems peculiar to the poetry of the Hebrews, at leaſt is but ſeldom to be met with

in

in that of other nations, I have determined to illuſtrate this part of my ſubject with a greater variety of examples than uſual. I mean, therefore, to inſtance in a regular order certain topics or common-places of Scripture, which ſeem to have furniſhed, if not all, at leaſt the principal part of theſe alluſions: it will be neceſſary at the ſame time to remark their figurative power and effect, and the regular and uniform method purſued in the application of them, which has been already ſtated as characteriſtical of the poetical imagery of the Hebrews.

The firſt of theſe topics, or common-places, is the Chaos and the Creation, which compoſe the firſt pages of the ſacred hiſtory. Theſe are conſtantly alluded to, as expreſſive of any remarkable change, whether proſperous or adverſe, in the public affairs; of the overthrow or reſtoration of kingdoms and nations: and are conſequently very common in the prophetic poetry, particularly when any unuſual degree of boldneſs is attempted. If the ſubject be the deſtruction of the Jewiſh empire by the Chaldeans, or a ſtrong denunciation of ruin againſt the enemies of

Iſrael,

Iſrael, it is depicted in exactly the ſame colours, as if univerſal nature were about to relapſe into the primeval chaos. Thus Jeremiah, in that ſublime, and indeed more than poetical viſion, in which is repreſented the impending deſolation of Judea:

" I beheld the earth, and lo! diſorder and con-
" fuſion;
" The heavens alſo, and there was no light.
" I beheld the mountains, and lo! they trembled;
" And all the hills ſhook.
" I beheld, and lo! there was not a man;
" And all the fowls of the heavens were fled.
" I beheld, and lo! the fruitful field (was be-
" come) the deſert;
" And all its cities were thrown down,
" Before the preſence of JEHOVAH,
" Before the fierce heat of his anger[1]."

And on a ſimilar ſubject Iſaiah expreſſes himſelf with wonderful force and ſublimity:

[1] JER. iv. 23—26. This image, and that which follows from Joel, the learned Michaelis will not allow to relate to the Moſaic chaos, but ſuppoſes them to be no more than a deſcription of ſome horrible and deſolating tempeſt. Of this the reader muſt judge for himſelf. T.

" And

" And he ſhall ſtretch over her the line of de-
" vaſtation,
" And the plummet of emptineſs [2]."

Each of them not only had in his mind the Moſaic chaos, but actually uſes the words of the divine hiſtorian. The ſame ſubjects are amplified and embelliſhed by the prophets with ſeveral adjuncts:

" The ſun and the moon are darkened,
" And the ſtars withdraw their ſhining.
" JEHOVAH alſo will thunder from Sion,
" And from Jeruſalem will he utter his voice;
" And the heavens and the earth ſhall ſhake [3]."

" And all the hoſt of heaven ſhall waſte away:
" And the heavens ſhall be rolled up like a ſcroll;
" And all their hoſt ſhall wither;
" As the withered leaf falleth from the vine,
" And as the blighted fig from the fig-tree [4]."

On the contrary, when he foretels the reſtoration of the Iſraelites:

" For I am JEHOVAH thy God;
" He who ſtilleth at once the ſea,

[2] ISAI. XXXIV. 11. [3] JOEL iii. 15, 16.
[4] ISAI. XXXIV. 4.

" Though

" Though the waves thereof roar;
" Jehovah God of Hoſts is his name.
" I have put my words in thy mouth;
" And with the ſhadow of my hand have I co-
" vered thee:
" To ſtretch out the heavens, and to lay the
" foundations of the earth;
" And to ſay unto Sion, Thou art my people [5]."

" Thus

[5] Isai. li. 15, 16. *Ragang*, " tranquilizing (or) in-
" ſtantaneouſly ſtilling:" it is commonly rendered *clear-
ing*, *dividing*, not only in this, but in the parallel places, Jer. xxxi. 35. Job xxvi. 12. I am, however, of opi-
nion, that the meaning of the word has been totally miſ-
taken. It denotes ſtrictly ſomething *inſtantaneous*; a ceſſation of motion, or a *ſudden quieting*; as when a bird ſuddenly lights upon a tree. See Isai. xxxiv. 14. The Septuagint very properly renders it, in the above-
quoted paſſage in Job, καταπαυων. Conſult the Con-
cordance.

" If any doubt can remain concerning this tranſlation
" of the word *Ragang*, it will meet ſufficient confirma-
" tion from the Arabic, in which the ſame verb implies,
" *to reduce a thing to its former, or a better, ſtate.* Whence
" are derived the following words, *Regang*, a lake (as it
" were a flood of water ſtopped and confined) *Ragiang*,
" to ſtop or confine a flood of water; *Ragangan*, ſtagnant
" or confined waters." H.

Concerning the phraſe " to ſtretch out the heavens," conſult Vitring. in Loc. *Author's Note.*

" ver.

" Thus therefore ſhall JEHOVAH conſole Sion;
" He ſhall conſole her deſolations:
" And he ſhall make her wilderneſs like Eden;
" And her deſert like the garden of JEHOVAH:
" Joy and gladneſs ſhall be found in her;
" Thankſgiving, and the voice of melody[6]."

In the former of theſe two laſt-quoted examples the univerſal deluge is exactly delineated, and on ſimilar ſubjects the ſame imagery generally occurs. Thus, as the devaſtation of the Holy Land is frequently repreſented by the reſtoration of ancient Chaos, ſo the ſame event is ſometimes expreſſed in metaphors ſuggeſted by the univerſal deluge:

" Behold, JEHOVAH emptieth the land, and
" maketh it waſte;

" ver. 16. *To ſtretch out the heavens*] In the preſent text " it is נטע, to *plant* the heavens: the phraſe is certainly " very obſcure; and in all probability is a miſtake for " נטה. This latter is the word uſed in ver. 13. juſt " before, in the very ſame ſentence; and this phraſe oc- " curs frequently in ISAIAH, Chap. xl. 22. xlii. 5. " xliv. 24. xlv. 12. The former in no other place. It " is alſo very remarkable, that in the Samaritan text, " NUMB. xxiv. 6. theſe two words are twice changed, " by miſtake, one for the other, in the ſame verſe."

Biſhop LOWTH's *Iſaiah*, *Notes*, p. 231.

[6] ISAI. li. 3.

" He

" He even turneth it upſide down, and ſcattereth
" abroad the inhabitants.
" For the flood-gates from on high are opened;
" And the foundations of the earth tremble.
" The land is grievouſly ſhaken;
" The land is utterly ſhattered to pieces;
" The land is violently moved out of her place;
" The land reeleth to and fro like a drunkard;
" And moveth this way and that, like a lodge
" for a night[7]."

Theſe are great ideas; indeed the human mind cannot eaſily conceive any thing greater or more ſublime. There is nothing, however, of this kind more forcible and elevated than that imagery which is taken from the deſtruction of Sodom, that being the next in order of theſe topics, and generally applied to expreſs the puniſhments to be inflicted by the Almighty on the wicked:

" He

[7] ISAI. xxiv. 1, 18, 19, 20. " *Bolekah*, τρυμων αὐτὴν, " (deſolateth it) SEPT. and in the ſame ſenſe the Jewiſh " Commentators: amongſt whom R. D. KIMCHI, hav- " ing recourſe to the Arabic, ſays, the word *Balekah* " ſignifies in that language, *a place in which no plant is* " *found to vegetate*." H.

" The word *Mlunah* properly ſignifies *an abode changed* " *nightly from place to place*; and is therefore expreſſive of " the vibrating and unſtable ſituation of the earth. The

" SEPT.

" He ſhall rain live coals upon the ungodly,
" Fire and ſulphur, and a burning ſtorm[8]: this
" ſhall be the contents of their cup[9]."

" For

" SEPT. is οπωροφυλακιον· The TARG. and SYR. ערולא,
" *a couch for one night; a travelling bed.* See BUXTORF
" *Lex Chald.* col. 1670. KIMCHI alſo explains the word
" in the ſame manner." H. *Author's Note.*

[8] This is an admirable image, and is taken from the ſchool of nature. The wind *Zilgaphoth*, which blows from the Eaſt, is very peſtilential, and therefore almoſt proverbial among the Orientals. In the months of July and Auguſt, when it happens to continue for the ſpace of ten minutes, it kills whatever is expoſed to it. Many wonderful ſtories are related of its effects by the Arabians, and their poets feign that the wicked, in their place of eternal torment, are to breathe this peſtiferous wind as their vital air. M.

[9] PSAL. xi. 6. *Pachim*, " live coals," ανθρακας, as it is rendered by the old Tranſlator, CHRYS. in Loc. Globes of fire, or meteors, ſuch as Pliny calls *Bolidas*, Nat. Hiſt. ii. 26. or ſimply the lightning ſeems to be underſtood. Compare PSAL. xviii. 13, 14. JOSEPHUS on *the Deſtruction of Sodom*, " God aſſailed the city with his " thunderbolts;" *Antiq.* i. 11. PHILO on the ſame: " Lightning fell down from heaven." *De Vit. Moſ.* i. 12. This is certainly more agreeable to the context than *ſnares*. The root is *Puach*, which though it ſometimes means to *enſnare*, yet more frequently means to *breathe forth*, or *emit*, fire, for inſtance. EZEK. xxi. 31. " *In the* " *fire of my wrath I will blow upon thee.*" The Ammonites are ſpoken of, as thrown into the furnace of the

" For it is the day of vengeance to JEHOVAH;
" The year of recompence to the defender of
" the cauſe of Sion.
" And her torrents ſhall be turned into pitch,
" And her duſt into ſulphur;
" And her whole land ſhall become burning
" pitch:
" By night or by day it ſhall not be extinguiſhed;
" For ever ſhall her ſmoke aſcend:

divine wrath: compare ch. xxii. 21. where almoſt the ſame words occur, except that the correſponding (and in this caſe ſynonymous) verb *Napach* is made uſe of, whence *Mapnach*, a bellows: JER. vi. 29. In the ſame ſenſe the verb *Puach* is introduced PROV. xxix. 8. " Scorners will " *inflame* a city." So alſo the SEPT. SYMMACHUS, the SYRIAC; and rightly, as appears from the antithetic member of the ſentence: " but *wiſe men will turn away* " wrath." From this explication of the root *Puach*, the word *Pach*, a *coal blown up*, is rightly derived: and *Piach*, (EXOD. ix. 8.) *embers*, in which the fire may yet be excited by blowing.

" The true ſenſe of the word *Pachim* in this place, " burning coals," will eaſily be confirmed from the uſe " of the verb *Puach* in the Arabic " *to boil a pot:*" " whence *Puchat* (*vehement heat*, or *burning*). It can- " not, however, be denied, that the Orientals ſometimes " call the LIGHTNING, *ſnares*, or *chains*. The Arabic " word חבל, (plur. חבלים) according to GOLIUS, not " only ſignifies a *chain*, but alſo the *track of a thunder-* " *bolt through the clouds*; ſo called, I apprehend, from the " continual corruſcations, which ſeem to be connected " with each other like a chain." H. *Author's Note.*

" From

" From generation to generation ſhe ſhall lie
" deſert;
" To everlaſting ages no one ſhall paſs through
" her [10]."

The emigration of the Iſraelites from Egypt, as it affords materials for many magnificent deſcriptions, is commonly applied in a metaphorical manner to many events, which bear no unapt reſemblance to it. Does God promiſe to his people liberty, aſſiſtance, ſecurity, and favour? The *Exodus* occurs ſpontaneouſly to the mind of the poet; the dividing of the ſea, the deſtruction of the enemy, the deſert which was ſafely traverſed, and the torrents burſting forth from the rocks, are ſo many ſplendid objects that force themſelves on his imagination:

" Thus ſaith JEHOVAH;
" Who made a way in the ſea;
" And a path in the mighty waters:
" Who brought forth the rider and the horſe,
" the army and the warrior;
" Together they lay down, they roſe no more;
" They were extinguiſhed, they were quenched
" like tow:

[10] ISAI. xxxiv. 8, 9, 10.

" Remember not the former things;
" And the things of ancient times regard not;
" Behold, I make a new thing;
" Even now ſhall it ſpring forth; will ye not
" regard it?
" Yea, I will make in the wilderneſs a way;
" In the deſert ſtreams of water [11]."

There is alſo another prophecy of the ſame divine poet, which in one ſenſe (though I think not the principal) is to be underſtood as relating to the liberation of the Iſraelites from the Babyloniſh captivity. In the exordium the ſame imagery is introduced, but in a very noble perſonification, than which nothing can be more ſublime:

" Awake, awake, cloath thyſelf with ſtrength,
" O arm of JEHOVAH!
" Awake as in the days of old, the ancient ge-
" nerations.
" Art thou not the ſame, that ſmote Rahab, that
" wounded the dragon?
" Art thou not the ſame, that dried up the ſea,
" the waters of the great deep?
" That made the depths of the ſea a path for the
" redeemed to paſs through [12]."

[11] ISAI. xliii. 16—19. See alſo xlviii. 21.
[12] ISAI. li. 9, 10.

Of

Of the ſame kind is the laſt of theſe topics which I ſhall inſtance, the deſcent of JEHOVAH at the delivery of the Law. When the Almighty is deſcribed as coming to execute judgment, to deliver the pious, and to deſtroy his enemies, or in any manner exerting his divine power upon earth, the deſcription is embelliſhed from that tremendous ſcene which was exhibited upon Mount Sinah [13]: there is no imagery more frequently recurred to than this, and there is none more ſublime: I will only trouble you with two examples:

" For, behold, JEHOVAH will go forth from his
" place;
" And he will come down, and will tread on the
" high places of the earth.
" And the mountains ſhall be molten under him:
" And the vallies ſhall cleave aſunder;
" As wax before the fire,
" As waters poured down a ſteep place [14]."

" The earth ſhook and was alarmed,
" And the foundations of the hills rocked with
" terror,
" For the wrath of JEHOVAH was hot againſt them.

[13] See EXOD. xix. 16, 18. DEUT. iv. 11, 12.
[14] MIC. i. 3, 4.

" Before his face a ſmoke aſcended,
" And a flame conſumed before his preſence,
" Burning fires were kindled by it.
" He bowed the heavens and came down,
" And clouds of darkneſs were beneath his feet.
" He rode upon the pinions of the Cherubim,
" And flew on the wings of the wind.
" He concealed himſelf in a veil of darkneſs;
" A pavilion encompaſſed him
" Of black water, and thick clouds of æther [15].
" From the brightneſs before him thick clouds
" paſt along,
" Hailſtones and burning fires.
" JEHOVAH thundered in the heavens;
" And the moſt high God ſent forth his voice;
" He ſhot out his arrows and diſperſed the ene-
" mies,
" And he multiplied his thunder and confounded
" them [16]."

Theſe examples, though literally tranſlated, and deſtitute of the harmony of verſe, will I think ſufficiently demonſtrate the force,

[15] Ver. 13 and 14. They ſeem to be corrected by the parallel paſſage, 2 SAM. xxii. 13, 14. See KENNICOT, Diſſert. i. Of the Hebrew Text, p. 464. " The words " ברד וגחלי אש, which are now repeated in ver. 14. are " wanting in four Manuſcripts." K. *Author's Note.*

[16] PSAL. xviii. 7—14.

the

the grandeur and ſublimity of theſe images, which, when applied to other events, ſuggeſt ideas ſtill greater, than when deſcribed as plain facts by the pen of the hiſtorian, in however magnificent terms. for to the greatneſs and ſublimity of the images which are alluded to, is added the pleaſure and admiration which reſults from the compariſon between them and the objects which they are brought to illuſtrate.

It is, however, worthy of obſervation, that, ſince many of theſe images poſſeſs ſuch a degree of reſemblance as renders them equally fit for the illuſtration of the ſame objects, it frequently happens that ſeveral of them are collected together, in order to magnify and embelliſh ſome particular event: of this there is an example in that very thankſgiving ode of David, which we have juſt now quoted [17]. For, after deſcribing the wrath and majeſty of God, in imagery taken from the deſcent upon Mount Sinai, as already explained, in the very next verſe, the diviſion of the Red-ſea and the River Jordan is alluded to:

[17] See alſo ISAI. xxxiv. and what is remarked on that paſſage, Lect. XX.

" Then appeared the channels of the waters;
" The foundations of the world were diſcovered;
" At thy reproofs, O JEHOVAH!
" At the breathing of the ſpirit of thine anger[18]."

It is evident, however, as well from the examples which have been adduced, as from the nature of the thing itſelf, that this ſpecies of metaphor is peculiarly adapted to the prophetic poetry. For ſome degree of obſcurity is the neceſſary attendant upon prophecy; not that, indeed, which confuſes the diction, and darkens the ſtyle; but that which reſults from the neceſſity of repreſſing a part of the future, and from the impropriety of making a complete revelation of every circumſtance connected with the prediction. The event itſelf, therefore, is often clearly indicated, but the manner and the circumſtances are generally involved in obſcurity. To this purpoſe imagery ſuch as we have

[18] PSAL. xviii. 16. Alluſions to the deſtruction of Nimrod, the firſt inſtitutor of idolatry, and his adherents, are, in the Prophets at leaſt, as frequent, if not more ſo, than to any other of the topics here noticed.—Examples of this kind I have pointed out in a Diſſertation on Fallen Angels, publiſhed by Johnſon:—and in another edition ſhall inſtance many more. S. H.

ſpecified

ſpecified is excellently adapted, for it enables the prophet more forcibly to impreſs upon the minds of his auditors thoſe parts of his ſubject which admit of amplification, the force, the ſplendour, the magnitude of every incident; and at the ſame time more completely to conceal, what are proper to be concealed, the order, the mode, and the minuter circumſtances attending the event. It is alſo no leſs apparent, that in this reſpect the ſacred poetry bears little or no analogy to that of other nations; ſince neither hiſtory nor fable afforded to the profane writers a ſufficiently important ſtore of this kind of imagery; nor did their ſubjects in general require that uſe or application of it.

This ſpecies of metaphor is indeed ſo adapted, as I before obſerved, to the nature of prophecy, that even profane poetry, when of the prophetic kind, is not altogether deſtitute of it: and we find that Virgil himſelf, in delivering his prophecies, has more than once adopted this method:

" Simois nor Xanthus ſhall be wanting there;
" A new Achilles ſhall in arms appear:
" And he too goddeſs-born,——

" Another

" Another Tiphys ſhall new ſeas explore,
" Another Argos brave the Iberian ſhore,
" Another Helen other wars create,
" And great Achilles urge the Trojan fate [19]:"

Though ſome will perhaps be inclined to interpret this paſſage literally from the completion of the *Great year*, and the doctrine of the general reſtitution of all things [20]. There is, indeed, this difference between the ſacred and profane writers, that among the latter we find frequent examples of metaphors taken from ſome remarkable perſon and event, applied to ſome other event or character [21]; but we never find from ſuch facts

[19] DRYDEN's *Virgil*, Æn. vi. 135. Eclog. iv. 41.

[20] See ORIGEN *contra Celſum*, Lib. iv. p. 208. Edit. Spencer.

[21] Alluſions to ancient hiſtory, both fabulous and authentic, are common with the poets and orators of all nations. There is a very fine one of this kind in the ſecond Philippic of Cicero. When he replies to Antony's accuſation of being concerned in Cæſar's death, he exclaims, that he glories in the accuſation:—" I eſteem " it," ſays he, " as great an honour to be accounted a " partner in ſuch an action, as if, with the princes of " the Greeks, I had been incloſed in the Trojan horſe." But I do not recollect a more beautiful inſtance than one of a contemporary poet:

" Humility

facts a general or common image derived, which, as an eſtabliſhed mode of expreſſion, is regularly applied to the illuſtration of ſimilar objects, even to the deſignation of a univerſal or unlimited idea.

I have claſſed all theſe examples under one general head of Metaphor, though many of them might more properly be referred to that of Allegory: but this circumſtance is of no importance to the object which I was deſirous of elucidating. Many, indeed, of thoſe which I have produced on this laſt occaſion, might more properly be referred to that ſublimer kind of allegory, which in its principal view looks forward to a meaning much more important than that which is obvious and literal; and under the oſtenſible ſubject, as under a rind or ſhell, conceals one interiour and more ſacred. Of this, however, we ſhall

" Humility herſelf, divinely mild,
" Sublime Religion's meek and modeſt child,
" Like the dumb ſon of Croeſus, in the ſtriſe,
" When force aſſail'd his father's ſacred life,
" Breaks ſilence, and, with filial duty warm,
" Bids thee revere her parent's hallowed form!"

HAYLEY's *Eſſay on Hiſtory*, addreſſed to Mr. GIBBON, Eſſay iii. v. 379. T.

preſently

preſently have occaſion to ſpeak more explicitly; for when we come to treat of the Allegory of the Hebrews, it will be neceſſary to touch upon that ſpecies (however difficult and obſcure the ſubject) in which the ſublimity of many of the ſacred poems will be found chiefly to conſiſt [22].

[22] Profeſſor Michaelis makes a very conſiderable addition to this Lecture, concerning thoſe images or figures which are taken from poetic fable. He aſſerts that ſuch fable is eſſential to all poetry; that whoever has a taſte for poetry cannot poſſibly take it in a literal ſenſe, and that the ſole purpoſe of it is ornament and pleaſure.

He obſerves that there are many particulars, in which a wonderful agreement may be diſcovered between the fables of the Greeks and Romans, and thoſe of the Hebrews. He is of opinion that this agreement clearly indicates a common ſource, which he ſuppoſes to be Egypt. From Egypt, Homer and the other Greek poets borrowed the principal of their fables, as we may learn from Herodotus and Heliodorus: nor is it at all improbable, that the Hebrews ſhould do the ſame, who were for two ſucceſſive ages the ſubjects and ſcholars of the Egyptians. The moſt ancient Hebrew poem, Job, abounds in Egyptian and fabulous imagery: as may be ſeen in the Profeſſor's Diſſertation on that ſubject before the Academy of Sciences.

He begins with inſtancing a common fabulous notion of the ſun retiring to reſt in the ſea, and there ſpending the night in the indulgence of the paſſions. This, he ſays, is ſo familiar an idea to the Hebrews, that it occurs

even

even in proſe. The ſetting ſun is called בוא (to enter or come in) and the moon נאסף (to be received as a gueſt). In the ixth Pſalm, however, the fiction is expreſſed in ſtill bolder terms:

" For he hath fixed a tabernacle for the ſun,
" Who cometh forth as a bridegroom from his chamber,
" And rejoiceth as a ſtrong man to run a race."

Nor is the deſcription of the Atlantic very far diſtant from this idea, PSAL. cxxxix. 9.

" If I take the wings of the Morning,
" And dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the ſea;
" Even there thy hand ſhall lead me,
" And thy right hand ſhall hold me."

The reſemblance between this image and the fable of Aurora, who was ſuppoſed to retire to reſt to the borders of the ocean, and there enter the chamber of Tithonus, can ſcarcely fail to ſtrike every claſſical reader. There is this difference, however, between the Greek and Hebrew fictions. With the latter the " Sun runs his race," and Aurora is depicted with wings; with the former, who perhaps might imitate the Perſian manner in the deſcription, the Sun has a chariot and horſes, which do not occur in the Hebrew poets, though they are mentioned as appendages to the idol of the Sun (2 KINGS xxiii. 11.)

The Profeſſor next obſerves, that the Greek and Latin poets aſſigned to their Jupiter a *chariot* and horſes of thunder, probably from the reſemblance between the noiſe of a chariot and that of thunder. The Hebrews, he remarks, have a ſimilar fable; and the *Cherubim* are expreſsly the horſes of JEHOVAH's chariot. He refers to a diſſertation

diſſertation on this ſubject publiſhed by himſelf in the GOTTINGEN MEMOIRS, T. i. p. 157—189. He reminds his readers of the common but truly poetical expreſſion, "JEHOVAH of Hoſts," and how frequently he is deſcribed as "ſitting upon the Cherubim." PSAL. xcix. 1.

"JEHOVAH reigneth, let the people tremble;
"He ſitteth on the Cherubim, let the earth be moved."

In plain language he thunders, ſo that the earth ſhakes, or as Horace would have expreſſed it:

"JEHOVAH per cœlum tonantes,
"Egit equos, volucremque currum:
"Quo bruta tellus, & vaga flumina,
"Quo Styx, & inviſi horrida Tænari
"Sedes, Atlanteuſque finis
"Concutitur."

"JEHOVAH Lord of all above,
"Late through the floating fields of air,
"The face of heaven, ſerene and fair,
"His thundering ſteeds and winged chariot drove;
"When at the burſting of his flames,
"The ponderous earth, and vagrant ſtreams,
"Infernal Styx, the dire abode
"Of hateful Tænarus profound,
"And Atlas to his utmoſt bound,
"Trembled beneath the terrors of the God."

FRANCIS's *Hor.* B. i. v. 34.

The expreſſion is ſtill bolder in PSAL. lxviii. 17. and the ſame idea is introduced with ſuperior elegance in the lxvth, where God is deſcribed as viſiting the earth, and diſpenſing fatneſs and plenty. He refers alſo to PSAL. xviii. 10. civ.

civ. 3, 4. and to HABAK. iii. 8. He ſhews that this has not only been a common fiction with the Greeks and Romans, but even with the Swedes, and other Northern nations. He remarks the admirable uſe which Milton has made of it, as well as of other poetical fictions applied to ſacred ſubjects.

Another fable, which our Commentator points out as common to the Hebrews with the Greeks and Romans, and evidently derived from the ſame ſource, is the fiction of a Golden age. To this purpoſe he cites the three prophecies of Iſaiah, in which the kingdom of the Meſſiah is deſcribed, in almoſt the ſame colours as Virgil depicts the happy ſtate of Rome under Auguſtus.

He proceeds in the third place to point out the reſemblance between the poetic deſcriptions of a future ſtate, which are furniſhed by the Hebrew poets, and thoſe of the Greeks. He is of an opinion, contrary to that of many learned men, who have attributed them to the Celts, that the Greeks were altogether indebted to Egypt for their deſcriptions. He quotes Joſephus, who, ſpeaking of the Eſſenes, a people who as to country, philoſophy, opinions, diſcipline, were more Egyptian than Jewiſh, adds, "that in this reſpect they reſemble the Greeks, namely, "in aſſerting that the good ſhall enjoy another life, in a "pleaſant ſituation beyond the ocean, free from ſtorms, "tempeſts, and all exceſſes of cold or heat, and which is "conſtantly refreſhed by a delightful breeze ſpringing "from the ocean."—"The Greeks, in the ſame manner," he obſerves, "have aſſigned to their heroes and "demigods, the happineſs of Elyſium." The opinion of the Bramins is ſimilar, who, the Profeſſor aſſerts, have borrowed all their manners and philoſophy from the Egyptians as well as the Gauls, the Greeks, &c. &c.

He

He thinks, this hypotheſis is clearly demonſtrated by the analogy between theſe opinions and the rites or ceremonies of ſepulture among the Egyptians. *Bute*, the Egyptian goddeſs, who preſided over the dead, had a temple built upon ſome floating iſlands in the Butic lake. To this the Greeks are, by their own confeſſion, indebted for their fable of Charon, &c. for on the day appointed for burial, the name of the deceaſed being announced, certain judges were convened at the lake, where a boat was ready; the pilot of which, in the Egyptian language, was called Charon. Before the deceaſed was put on-board, full liberty was given to all preſent of accuſing him. But if no accuſer was preſent, or if his accuſation was proved groundleſs, the body was put into the boat, and carried acroſs the lake to the ſepulchral fields (DIOD. SIC. L. i. c. 92.) The ſepulchres of their kings alſo were ſituated on iſlands formed by art, by admitting the water of the Nile, as HERODOTUS teſtifies (L. ii. c. 124.)

Moſes, therefore, being educated among them, and initiated in their hieroglyphic learning, to which the Grecian mythology is under ſo many obligations, ſeems to allude to the fable of Elyſium (or the bleſſed iſles) when in that beautiful poem, which conſtitutes the xcth PSALM, at the 10th verſe, he thus expreſſes himſelf:

" The ſtrength of our years is labour and ſorrow,
" It paſſeth *over* quickly, and we *fly*."

" The words *we fly*, if I am not miſtaken," adds the Profeſſor, " might be rendered, *we ſet ſail*, ſince there is " ſomething alike in the actions of ſailing and flying, and " the one is frequently made uſe of poetically for the " other."

There

There is another paſſage of Moſes, which, contrary to the opinion of all the commentators, M. Michaelis obſerves, ſeems to have been underſtood by St. Paul alone, in the ſenſe he ſpeaks of, namely, the words "beyond "the ſea," as alluding to the ſepulchre, or Elyſium fields. Moſes is addreſſing the Iſraelites, not as a poet, indeed, but as an orator, concerning "the circumciſion "of the heart," of which the common rite was only an emblem or a type. *The law*, ſays he, *which I command thee this day is not hidden from thee*, &c. *It is not in heaven, that thou ſhouldeſt ſay, Who ſhall go up for us to heaven, and bring it down to us? Neither is it* BEYOND THE SEA, *that thou ſhouldeſt ſay, Who will go over the ſea for us?* &c. (DEUT. xxx. 11, 12, 13.) St. Paul, after quoting theſe words, adds, *Who ſhall deſcend into the deep? that is, to bring up Chriſt again from the dead.* The Profeſſor acknowledges that theſe words created him no ſmall difficulty, before he could perceive their agreement with the original: until one of his auditors remarked, that "Moſes "might probably allude to the cuſtom of the Egyptians, "who buried their dead on the other ſide of a lake," &c. This ſentiment, he ſays, ſtruck him ſo forcibly, that he immediately adopted it, and in conſequence of it, offers the following paraphraſe of the paſſage already quoted. "The precept" (ſays Moſes) "which I now inculcate" (namely, that of loving and worſhipping the one true God, which is the real circumciſion of the heart) "is "unlike ſome of my precepts, which have a myſtical "meaning, not eaſily underſtood. There is no need "that ſome perſon of uncommon learning ſhould come "down from heaven to inſtruct you in it: no need that "ſome perſon ſhould croſs the lake to the *Iſles of the "Bleſſed*, to learn from the dead what this obſcure pre-"cept conceals. All is eaſy and obvious," &c.

Our Annotator next refers to a paſſage in JOB, ch. ix. 25 and 26.

" My days are ſwifter than a courier,
" They flee away, they ſee no pleaſure:
" They are paſſed away with the ſwift [illegible],
" As an eagle ruſhing on his prey."

This he allows might have been ſaid, without any alluſion to the *Iſles of the Bleſſed*, or Elyſium, though the picture is more ſtriking if taken in that view; but he thinks the alluſion is clear beyond a doubt if we regard the anſwer of Zophar, ch. xi. 16, 17, 18.

" Thou ſhalt forget thy miſery,
" Or remember it as waters paſſed away;
" And after the noon-tide thy age ſhall be happier,
" Thou ſhalt fly (*or fail*), it ſhall be morning.
" Thou ſhalt be ſecure becauſe there is hope;
" Thou ſhalt dig (*thy ſepulchre*), and calmly lie down."

If any one ſhould doubt of theſe examples, he thinks there is one ſtill clearer in ch. xxiv. 18—21.

" He is light upon the waters:
" His portion in the earth is curſed.
" He ſhall not behold the way of the vineyards," &c.

" That is," as he explains it, " The wicked ſhall be " carried down the rapid ſtream of Acheron, and ſhall " have their portion in a land which is accurſed. It " ſhall not be permitted them to enter into the gardens " of the bleſſed."

The learned Profeſſor is of opinion, that even the infernal rivers were not unknown to the Hebrews, and that they are mentioned in the xxiii'd PSALM under the name

name of the rivers of *Belial*. He thinks it not fair to interpret Belial in this place *Satan*, into whoſe power David was not apprehenſive of falling, though he complains that the *ſnares* of *death* fell upon him, ver. 4, 5, 6. It is rather, he aſſerts, derived from the negative particle *beli* (non) and *jagnal* (*altus fuit*) that is, *not high*, or eſtimable; whence men of *Belial* are the *vileſt* of men; and the rivers of *Belial*, the rivers of hell. The following lines in this ſenſe are truly poetical:

" Diſtracted with evils, I called upon God;
" I am ſaved from my enemies.
" The ſnares of death were ſpread over my ſoul;
" The floods of hell made me afraid;
" The waters of Tartarus encompaſſed me," &c.

M.

There is ſomething ſo ingenious in the above obſervations, that I could not help exhibiting a ſlight ſketch of them to the reader; but, as I before intimated, many of them are too fanciful to challenge any ſerious attention. It is impoſſible, for inſtance, to find the ſmalleſt alluſion in the paſſage from PSAL. cxxxix. 9. to any fable ſimilar to that of Aurora and Tithonus.—I am, on the contrary, inclined to believe, that nothing more is meant by the *wings of the morning*, than an alluſion to the ſwift and fleeting nature of time, and particularly the pleaſant and jocund hours of morning; and the poet only means to ſay, " Had I the ſwiftneſs of time, and could " tranſport myſelf in a few hours to the boundaries of " the ocean, even there," &c. If one were even inclined to admit his hypotheſis concerning the *Cherubim*, I ſee no occaſion to ſuppoſe them to have any kind of relation to the chariot or horſes of the heathen JUPITER.

The only poetical idea, under which the great Governor of the Univerſe can be depicted, is that of a powerful monarch; and under this idea it is as natural for the Hebrew poets to aſſign him a chariot and other inſignia of royalty, as for the Greeks; and this they may do without having the ſlighteſt connexion with each other, or without any neceſſity of ſtudying in the Egyptian ſchool. The ſuppoſition that the prophecies of Iſaiah, relating to the time of the Meſſiah's appearing, are borrowed from the fables concerning the Golden age, is ſtill more improbable. The Prophet, in thoſe paſſages, is deſcribing a ſtate of temporal happineſs; ſuch is the intention of thoſe poets who have celebrated the Golden age; and is it any thing extraordinary that ſome ſimilar ideas occur upon a ſubject perfectly ſimilar, and one of ſo general a nature? The arguments of our Annotator to prove that the Greeks were indebted to Egypt for their notions of a future ſtate, demonſtrate much learning and ingenuity, and are, I confeſs, ſatisfactory and convincing to me: But when he endeavours to find the ſame notions in the Hebrew poets, the reader will, I think, agree with me, that he is altogether viſionary, and ſtrains violently a few general expreſſions to adapt them to his particular purpoſe. I muſt add, that his Latin tranſlations of thoſe paſſages of Scripture, which I thought myſelf in ſome meaſure obliged to follow in delivering his ſentiments, are by no means ſo faithful to the original as our common verſion, and yet on theſe depends the principal force of his argument. T.

The wings of the morning, I believe, ſtripped of their imagery, are *the beams of the riſing ſun*. *Wings* are attributed to the moon by Manilius:

"Ultima ad Heſperios infectis volvere alis:"

and,

and, if my memory fail me not, in the hymn aſcribed to Homer, εις Σελανναν.

Inſtead alſo of referring to thoſe imaginary *Iſles of the Bleſſed*, which the Profeſſor thinks are alluded to by Moſes, it ſeems far more probable that he had a retroſpect to the place where the wicked after death were ſuppoſed to be confined; and which, from the deſtruction of the old world by the deluge, the covering of the Aſphaltic vale with the Dead Sea, &c. was believed to be ſituated *under the waters*. To this idea there are alluſions in the ſacred writings without number. See the ſecond command in the Decalogue, JOB xxvi. 5, 6. and many paſſages in the Pſalms and the Prophets.—The ſtory in the Goſpel of the dæmons entering the herd of ſwine, and urging them into the *ſea*, which in the SEPTUAGINT verſion of JOB xli. is ſtyled τον ΤΑΡΤΑΡΟΝ της Αβυσσου, *the* Tartarus *of the abyſs*. S. H.

LECTURE X.

OF ALLEGORY.

Three forms of Allegory: 1. *Continued Metaphor; which is ſcarcely worth diſtinguiſhing from the ſimple Metaphor—The freedom of the Hebrews in confounding the forms of the Metaphor, Allegory, and Compariſon: a more perfect form alſo of Allegory inſtanced—*2. *The Parable; and its principal characteriſtics: that it ought to be formed from an apt and well-known image, the ſignification of which is obvious and definite; alſo from one which is elegant and beautiful; that its parts and adjuncts be perſpicuous, and conduce to the main object; that it be conſiſtent, and muſt not confound the literal and figurative meaning—The Parables of the Prophets, and particularly of Ezekiel, examined according to this ſtandard.*

ANOTHER branch of the *Maſhal*, or figurative ſtyle, is Allegory, that is, a figure which, under the literal ſenſe of the words, conceals a foreign or diſtant meaning[1]. Three forms of Allegory may be obſerved

[1] The Allegorical ſeems to be one of the firſt modes of compoſition adopted by nations emerging from barbariſm. Indeed it is only calculated to intereſt thoſe who have made little progreſs in intellectual purſuits. It is a mere play of the fancy, and ſuch as requires not enough of

ſerved in the ſacred poetry. The firſt is that which is commonly treated of by Rhetoricians, a continuation of metaphor. "When ſeveral kindred metaphors ſucceed "one another, they alter," ſays Cicero, "the form of a compoſition; for which "reaſon a ſucceſſion of this kind is called by "the Greeks an *Allegory*; and properly, in "reſpect to the etymology of the word; but "Ariſtotle, inſtead of conſidering it as a "new ſpecies of figure, has more judiciouſly "comprized ſuch modes of expreſſion under "the general appellation of Metaphors [1]." I therefore ſcarcely eſteem it worth while to dwell upon this ſpecies of allegory, ſince hitherto I have made no diſtinction between it and the ſimple metaphor: for many of the examples, which I produced as metaphors, are probably of this claſs: the principle of

of exertion to occupy thoſe who have been accuſtomed to the exerciſes of Reaſon. This remark, however, muſt not be extended to the excluſion of allegorical expreſſions or paſſages from poetry; but is meant only to be applied to compoſitions purely allegorical, ſuch as SPENSER's *Fairy Queen*, which, notwithſtanding ſome incomparably poetical paſſages, finds few readers in the preſent age. T.

[1] *Orator.*

each is the ſame, nor indeed would it be an eaſy matter to reſtrict each to its proper limits, or to define where the one ends or the other begins.

It will not, however, be foreign to our purpoſe to remark the peculiar manner, in which the Hebrew poets uſe the congenial figures, Metaphor, Allegory, and Compariſon, and particularly in the prophetic poetry. When they undertake to expreſs any ſentiment in ornamented language, they not only illuſtrate it with an abundance and variety of imagery, but they ſeldom temper or regulate this imagery by any fixed principle or ſtandard. Unſatisfied with a ſimple metaphor, they frequently run it into an allegory, or mingle with it a direct compariſon. The allegory ſometimes precedes and ſometimes follows the ſimile; to this is added a frequent change of imagery, and even of perſons and tenſes; through the whole diſplaying a degree of boldneſs and freedom, unconfined by rule or method, altogether peculiar to the Hebrew poetry.

"Judah is a lion's whelp [3];"

[3] GEN. xlix. 9.

This

This metaphor is immediately drawn out into an allegory, with a change of perſon:

" From the prey, my ſon, thou art gone up;"

(to the dens in the mountains underſtood:)

In the ſucceeding ſentences the perſon is again changed, the image is gradually advanced, and the metaphor is joined with a compariſon, which is repeated:

" He ſtoopeth down, he coucheth, as a lion;
" And as a lioneſs; who ſhall rouſe him?"

Of a ſimilar nature is that remarkable prophecy, in which the exuberant increaſe of the Goſpel on its firſt diſſemination is moſt explicitly foretold. In this paſſage, however, the mixture of the metaphor and compariſon, as well as the ellipſis of the word to be repeated, creates a degree of obſcurity:

" Beyond the womb of the morning is the dew
" of thy offspring to thee[4]:"

That is, " preferable to the dew which pro-
" ceeds from the womb of the morning;
" more copious, more abundant[5]." In the interpre-

[4] PSAL. cx, 3.

[5] Some of the more modern tranſlators ſeem at length agreed that this is the proper ſenſe of the paſſage; none of

interpretation of this paſſage, what monſtrous blunders has an ignorance of the Hebrew idiom produced!

There

of them, however, as far as I have been able to judge, has hitherto actually explained it at length. I ſhall, therefore, take advantage of this opportunity to give my ſentiments upon it, leſt doubts ſhould afterwards ariſe concerning the meaning of a very important, and (as I think) a very clear paſſage of holy writ. The principal difficulty proceeds from the word *me-racham*, and from the ambiguity of the particle מ and the ellipſis of the word *tal:* which, I think, will be readily cleared up, if we attend to the following examples, the nature and meaning of which is evidently ſimilar. PSAL. iv. 8.

" Thou haſt excited joy in my heart,
" *Beyond* the time in which their corn and wine increaſed:"

That is, " beyond (or ſuperior to) the joy of that time." ISAI. x. 10.

" Although their ſhrines are *before* Jeruſalem and Sa-
" maria:"

That is, " excel the ſhrines of Jeruſalem and Samaria." JOB xxxv. 2. " My juſtice *before* God:" that is, " My " juſtice is greater than the juſtice of God:" (compare xxxii. 2. and xl. 8.) In the ſame manner *me-racham*, " *before the womb*," is the ſame as *me-tal racham*, " *be-* " *fore the dew of the womb*." Nor are there wanting in the Greeks examples of ſimilar elipſes: Μηδ' Ολυμπιας αγωνα Φερτερον αυδασομεν. " Neither can we celebrate a " conteſt more noble *than is that* of Olympia:" μηδε του Ολυμπιακου

There is, indeed, a certain form, which this kind of allegory ſometimes aſſumes, more perfect and regular, which therefore ought not to be overlooked, and that is, when it occupies the whole compaſs and argument of the compoſition. An excellent example of this may be ſeen in that well-known allegory of Solomon [6], in which old age is ſo admirably

Ολυμπιακου αγωνος ἑτερον βελτιονα. PIND. Ολυμπ. A. v. 11. & *Schol.* Edit. Oxon.

Ως ἡ λακαινα των Φρυγων μειων πολις;

" As if the city of the Lacedemonians were ſmaller *than* " *that* of the Phrygians."

EURIP. *Androm.* v. 193.

The metaphor taken from the dew is expreſſive of fœcundity, plenty, multitude: (compare 2 SAM. xvii. 11, 12. MIC. v. 7.) " A numerous offspring ſhall be " born unto thee, and a numerous offspring it ſhall " produce." *Jaladecha*, " thy youth," or " the youth " that are produced from thee;" the abſtract for the concrete, as *Shebah*, " whiteneſs," or being grey-headed, for a grey-headed man, LEV. xix. 32. *Shebi*, " capti- " vity," for a captive, ISAI. xlix. 24. and ſo the Chaldee Interpreter takes the following, יתבון לרוחין תולדתך, " Thy " offspring ſhall ſit (or remain) in confidence."

Author's Note.

[6] ECCLES. xii. 2—6. Concerning this paſſage, conſult the learned Commentary of that excellent phyſician of

admirably depicted. The inconveniencies of increaſing years, the debility of mind and body, the torpor of the ſenſes, are expreſſed, moſt learnedly and elegantly indeed, but with ſome degree of obſcurity, by different images derived from nature and common life: for by this enigmatical compoſition, Solomon, after the manner of the Oriental ſages, meant to put to trial the acuteneſs of his readers. It has on this account afforded much exerciſe to the ingenuity of the learned, many of whom have differently, it is true, but with much learning and ſagacity, explained the paſſage.

There is alſo in Iſaiah an allegory, which, with no leſs elegance of imagery, is more ſimple and regular, more juſt and complete in the form and colouring: I ſhall, therefore, quote the whole paſſage[7]. The Prophet is explaining the deſign and manner of the divine judgments: he is inculcating the principle, that God adopts different modes of

of the laſt century Dr. JOHN SMITH. See alſo what has been lately advanced on the ſame ſubject by the firſt phyſician of this age, Dr. R. MEAD, in his *Medica Sacra*.
Author's Note.

[7] ISAI. xxviii. 23—29.

acting

acting in the chaſtiſement of the wicked, but that the moſt perfect wiſdom is conſpicuous in all; that "he will," as he had urged before, "exact judgment by the line, and "righteouſneſs by the plummet[8];" that he ponders with the moſt minute attention the diſtinctions of times, characters, and circumſtances; all the motives to lenity or ſeverity. All this is expreſſed in a continued allegory, the imagery of which is taken from agriculture and threſhing: the uſe and ſuitableneſs of which imagery, as in a manner conſecrated to this ſubject, I have formerly explained, ſo that there is no need of further detail at preſent.

"Liſten ye and hear my voice;
"Attend and hearken unto my words.
"Doth the huſbandman plow every day that he
"may ſow,
"Opening, and breaking the clods of his field?
"When he hath made even the face thereof;
"Doth he not then ſcatter the dill, and caſt
"abroad the cummin;
"And ſow the wheat in due meaſure;
"And the barley, and the rye, hath its appointed
"limit?

[8] ISAI. xxviii. 17.

"For

" For his God rightly inſtructeth him; he fur-
" niſheth him with knowledge.
" The dill is not beaten out with the corn-drag;
" Nor is the wheel of the wain made to turn
" upon the cummin:
" But the dill is beaten out with the ſtaff;
" And the cummin with the ſtail: but the
" bread-corn [9] with the threſhing-wain.

" But

[9] לחם ירק] I have annexed theſe to the preceding, diſregarding the Maſoretic diſtinction; in this I follow the LXX (though they have greatly miſtaken the ſenſe) and SYMMACHUS: I ſuſpect alſo that the ו before לחם has been obliterated; which SYMMACHUS expreſſed by the particle δὲ, the VULGATE by *autem*. The tranſlation will ſufficiently explain my reaſons. LECHEM, however, ſeems to be taken for corn, PSAL. civ. 14. and ECCLES. xi. 1. " Caſt thy bread," that is, " ſow thy ſeed, or corn, " upon the face of the waters:" In plain terms, ſow without any hope of a harveſt: do good to them on whom you even think your benefaction thrown away. A precept enforcing great and diſintereſted liberality, with a promiſe annexed to it; " for after many days thou ſhalt find " it again:" at length, if not in the preſent world, at leaſt in a future thou ſhalt have a reward. The learned Dr. GEORGE JUBB, the gentleman alluded to in p. 138, ſuggeſted this explanation, which he has elegantly illuſtrated from Theognis and Phocylides, who intimate that to do acts of kindneſs to the ungrateful and unworthy, is the ſame as ſowing the ſea:

Vain are the favours done to vicious men,
Not vainer 'tis to ſow the foaming deep;

The

" But not for ever will he continue thus to
" threſh it;
" Nor to vex it with the wheel of his wain;
" Nor to bruiſe it with the hoofs of his cattle.
" This alſo proceedeth from JEHOVAH God of
" hoſts:
" He ſheweth himſelf wonderful in counſel, great
" in operation [10]."

Another

The deep no pleaſant harveſt ſhall afford,
Nor will the wicked ever make return.

THEOG. Γνωμ. v. 105.

To befriend the wicked is like ſowing in the ſea.

PHOCYL. v. 141.

Theſe, indeed, invert the precept of Solomon; nor is it extraordinary that they ſhould:

The one, frail human power alone produc'd;
The other, God.———

Author's Note.

[10] " Four methods of threſhing are here mentioned,
" by different inſtruments; the flail, the drag, the wain,
" and the treading of the cattle. The ſtaff or flail was
" uſed for the grain that was too tender to be treated in
" the other methods. The drag conſiſted of a ſort of
" frame of ſtrong planks, made rough at the bottom with
" hard ſtone or iron: it was drawn by horſes or oxen
" over the corn-ſheaves ſpread on the floor, the drivers
" ſitting upon it. The wain was much like the former,
" but had wheels with iron teeth, or edges, like a ſaw;
" and it ſhould ſeem that the axle was armed with iron
" teeth

Another kind of allegory is that, which, in the proper and reſtricted ſenſe, may be called Parable, and conſiſts of a continued narration of a fictitious event, applied by way of ſimile to the illuſtration of ſome important truth. The Greeks call theſe allegories αἶνοι (or *apologues*), the Latins *fabulæ* (or fables): and the writings of the Phrygian ſage, or thoſe compoſed in imitation of him, have acquired the greateſt celebrity. Nor has our Saviour himſelf diſdained to adopt the ſame method of inſtruction, of whoſe parables it is doubtful, whether they excel moſt in wiſdom and utility, or in ſweetneſs, elegance, and perſpicuity. I muſt obſerve, that the appellation of Parable having been applied to his diſcourſes of this kind, the term is now reſtricted from its former extenſive ſignification to a more confined ſenſe. This ſpecies of compoſition occurs very frequently

" teeth or ſerrated wheels throughout. The drag not " only forced out the grain, but cut the ſtraw in pieces " for fodder for the cattle; for in the Eaſtern countries " they have no hay. The laſt method is well known " from the law of Moſes, which " forbids the ox to be " muzzled, when he treadeth out the corn."

Biſhop LOWTH's *Iſaiah*, p. 152.

in

in the prophetic poetry, and particularly in that of Ezekiel. But to enable us to judge with more certainty upon the ſubject, it will be neceſſary to explain in a few words ſome of the primary qualities of the poetic parables, that, by conſidering the general nature of them, we may decide more accurately on the merits of particular examples.

It is the firſt excellence of a parable to turn upon an image well known and applicable to the ſubject, the meaning of which is clear and definite; for this circumſtance will give it perſpicuity, which is eſſential to every ſpecies of allegory. If, therefore, by this rule we examine the parables of the ſacred Prophets, we ſhall, I am perſuaded, find them not in the leaſt deficient. They are in general founded upon ſuch imagery as is frequently uſed, and ſimilarly applied by way of metaphor and compariſon in the Hebrew poetry. Moſt accurate examples of this are to be found in the parable of the deceitful vineyard [11], of the uſeleſs vine [12], which is given to the fire; for under this imagery the ungrateful people of God are

[11] ISAI. v. 1—7. [12] EZEK. xv. and xix. 10—14.

more than once deſcribed. I may inſtance alſo that of the lion's whelps falling into the pit [13], in which is appoſitely diſplayed the captivity of the Jewiſh princes; or that of the fair, lofty, and flouriſhing cedar of Lebanon [14], which raiſed its head to the clouds, cut down at length and neglected; exhibiting, as in a picture, the proſperity and the fall of the king of Aſſyria. I will add one more example (there is, indeed, ſcarcely any which might not with propriety be introduced here) I mean that, in which the love of God towards his people, and their piety and fidelity to him, are expreſſed by an alluſion to the ſolemn covenant of marriage. Ezekiel has purſued this image with uncommon freedom

[13] EZEK. xix. 1—9.

[14] EZEK. xxxi. I take this paſſage according to the common explanation, diſregarding that of Meibomius, which I find is blamed by many of the learned: and indeed it has ſome difficulties, which are not eaſy to clear away. Nor can I indeed reliſh that *Aſſyrian*, who has intruded himſelf I know not how. In the 10th for גבהת I think it were better to read גבה with the SYRIAC and VULGATE, which reading is adopted by the learned HOUBIGANT. Obſerve alſo, that the LXX have very rightly rendered *Bn Grabathim* by εις μεσον των νεφελων, "through the midſt of the clouds." *Author's Note.*

in two parables [15]; in truth almoſt all the ſacred poets have touched upon it. There was, therefore, no part of the imagery of the Hebrew poetry more eſtabliſhed than this; nor ought it to appear extraordinary, that Solomon, in that moſt elegant poem, the Canticles, ſhould diſtinguiſh and depict the moſt ſacred of all ſubjects with ſimilar outlines, and in ſimilar colours.

It is not, however, ſufficient, that the image be apt and familiar; it muſt alſo be elegant and beautiful in itſelf: ſince it is the purpoſe of a poetic parable, not only to explain more perfectly ſome propoſition, but frequently to give it more animation and ſplendour. The imagery from natural objects is ſuperior to all other in this reſpect; for almoſt every picture from nature, if accurately drawn, has its peculiar beauty. As the parables of the ſacred poets, therefore, conſiſt chiefly of this kind of imagery, the elegance of the materials generally ſerves to recommend them. If there be any of a different kind, ſuch as may be accounted leſs

[15] EZEK. xvi. and xxiii.

delicate and refined, it ought to be conſidered, whether they are not to be accounted among thoſe, the dignity and grace of which are loſt to us, though they were perhaps wanting in neither to people of the ſame age and country. If any reader, for inſtance, ſhould be offended with the boiling pot of Ezekiel [16], and the ſcum flowing over into the fire; let him remember, that the prophet, who was alſo a prieſt, took the alluſion from his own ſacred rites: nor is there a poſſibility, that an image could be accounted mean or diſguſting, which was connected with the holy miniſtration of the Temple.

It is alſo eſſential to the elegance of a parable, that the imagery ſhould not only be apt and beautiful, but that all its parts and appendages ſhould be perſpicuous and pertinent. It is, however, by no means neceſſary, that in every parable the alluſion ſhould be complete in every part; ſuch a degree of reſemblance would frequently appear too minute and exact: but when the nature of the ſubject will bear, much more when it will even require a fuller explanation; and when the ſimilitude runs directly,

[16] EZEK. xxiv. 3, &c.

naturally,

naturally, and regularly, through every circumſtance, then it cannot be doubted that it is productive of the greateſt beauty. Of all theſe excellencies, there cannot be more perfect examples than the parables which have been juſt ſpecified. I will alſo venture to recommend the well-known parable of Nathan [17], although written in proſe, as well as that of Jotham [18], which appears to be the moſt ancient extant, and approaches ſomewhat nearer the poetical form [19].

To theſe remarks I will add another, which may be conſidered as the criterion of a pa-

[17] 2 SAM. xii. 1—4. [18] JUD. ix. 7—15.

[19] Poetry ſeems to me to be often ſtrangely confounded with oratory, from which it is, however, very different. Theſe inſtances appear to me only the rudiments of popular oratory, the *ancient* and *unrefined mode of ſpeaking*, as LIVY calls it: and if the reader will be at the pains to examine LIV. L. ii. c. 32. I dare believe he will be of the ſame opinion. Poetry, as our Author himſelf has ſtated, is one of the firſt arts, and was in a much more perfect ſtate, than we ſhould ſuppoſe from the paſſages in queſtion long before the days of Jotham: oratory is of more recent origin, and was, we may well ſuppoſe, at that period in its infancy; as CICERO remarks that it was one of the lateſt of the arts of Greece. *Brut.* c. 7. M.

See *Eſſays Hiſtorical and Moral*, p. 41.

rable, namely, that it be conſiſtent throughout, and that the literal be never confounded with the figurative ſenſe. In this reſpect it materially differs from the former ſpecies of allegory, which, deviating but gradually from the ſimple metaphor, does not always immediately exclude literal expreſſions, or words without a figure[*]. But both the fact itſelf, and this diſtinction, will more evidently appear from an example of each kind.

The

[*] I think there is great judgment and taſte in this remark, of which the parable of the Good Samaritan will afford a happy exemplification in the mention of the *man's journeying from Jeruſalem to Jericho*, a circumſtance that gives ſubſtance and reality to the parable.

It may be obſerved, moreover, that in allegorical writing the literal ſenſe may be ſometimes ſuffered to obtrude itſelf upon the figurative with very good effect, juſt as the gold that betrays itſelf in glimpſes from the plumage of the peacock, the ſcales of the dolphin, or (to illuſtrate my idea from Spenſer) the texture of the loom, augments thereby the ſplendour of their colours.

——" round about the walls y clothed were
" With goodly arras of great maieſty,
" Woven with gold and ſilk ſo cloſe and nere
" That the rich metall lurked privily,
" As fayning to be hidd from envious eye;
" Yet here, and there, and every where unawares
" It ſhewed itſelfe, and ſhone unwillingly;

" Like

The Pſalmiſt, (whoever he was) deſcribing the people of Iſrael as a vine [21], has continued the metaphor, and happily drawn it out through a variety of additional circumſtances. Among the many beauties of this allegory, not the leaſt graceful is that modeſty, with which he enters upon and concludes his ſubject, making an eaſy and gradual tranſition from plain to figurative language, and no leſs delicately receding back to the plain and unornamented narrative.

" Thou haſt brought a vine out of Egypt;
" Thou haſt caſt out the nations and planted it,
" Thou preparedſt room before it"——

After this follow ſome figurative expreſſions, leſs cautiouſly introduced: in which when he has indulged for ſome time, how elegantly does he revert to his proper ſubject!

" Like a diſcolour'd ſnake, whoſe hidden ſnares
" Through the green graſs his long bright burniſht back
" declares."

Faery Queene, B. 3. c. xi. ſ. 28.

A fine poetical allegory of this kind may be ſeen in the firſt ſtrophe of Gray's Ode on Poeſy. S. H.

[21] PSAL. lxxx. 9—18.

" Return, O God of Hoſts!
" Look down from heaven, and behold,
" And viſit this vine:
" And the branch which thy right hand hath
" planted;
" And the offspring [22] which thou madeſt ſtrong
" for thyſelf.
" It is burned in the fire, it is cut away;
" By the rebuke of thy countenance they periſh.
" Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right
" hand [23];
" Upon the ſon of man, whom thou madeſt
" ſtrong for thyſelf."

You may eaſily perceive, Gentlemen, how, in this firſt kind of allegory, the literal may be mingled with the figurative ſenſe; and even how graceful this practice appears, ſince light is more agreeably thrown upon the ſubject in an oblique manner, without too

[22] " If I am not miſtaken, all the old tranſlators, the " Chaldee excepted, ſeem to have read in this place *Ben* " *Adam*, " the ſon of man," as in ver. 18 Dr. KEN- " NICOTT affirms alſo that he found this ſame reading in " one manuſcript." H. *Author's Note.*

[23] That is, *the man who is joined to thee by a ſolemn covenant.* The Orientals all ſwear by lifting up the *right hand.* Hence alſo among the Arabs *jamin* is to ſwear. M.

bare

bare and direct an explication. But it is different, when the ſame image puts on the form of the other ſort of allegory, or parable, as in Iſaiah [24]. Here is no room for literal, or even ambiguous expreſſions; every word is figurative; the whole maſs of colouring is taken from the ſame pallet. Thus what, in the former quotation, is expreſſed in undiſguiſed language, namely, "the caſting out "of the nations, the preparation of the "place, and its deſtruction from the rebuke "of the Lord," is by Iſaiah expreſſed wholly in a figurative manner:—"The Lord ga-"thered out the ſtones from his vineyard, "and cleared it: but when it deceived him, "he threw down its hedge, and made it "waſte, and commanded the clouds that "they ſhould rain no rain upon it." Expreſſions, which in the one caſe poſſeſs a peculiar grace, would be abſurd and incongruous in the other. For the continued metaphor and the parable have a very different aim. The ſole intention of the former is to embelliſh a ſubject, to repreſent it more magnificently, or at the moſt to illuſtrate it; that, by deſcribing it in more ele-

[24] Chap. v. 1—7.

vated

vated language, it may ſtrike the mind more forcibly: but the intent of the latter is to withdraw the truth for a moment from our ſight, in order to conceal whatever it may contain ungraceful or diſguſting, and to enable it ſecretly to inſinuate itſelf, and obtain an aſcendancy as it were by ſtealth. There is, however, a ſpecies of parable, the intent of which is only to illuſtrate the ſubject: ſuch is that remarkable one of Ezekiel [25], which I juſt now commended, of the cedar of Lebanon: than which, if we conſider the imagery itſelf, none was ever more apt or more beautiful; if the deſcription and colouring, none was ever more elegant or ſplendid; in which, however, the poet has occaſionally allowed himſelf to blend the figurative with the literal deſcription [26]: whether he has done this becauſe the peculiar nature of this kind of parable required it, or whether his own fervid imagination alone, which diſdained the ſtricter rules of compoſition, was his guide, I can ſcarcely preſume to determine.

[25] Chap. xxxi. [26] See v. 11, 14—17.

LEC-

LECTURE XI.

OF THE MYSTICAL ALLEGORY.

The definition of the Myſtical Allegory—Founded upon the allegorical or typical nature of the Jewiſh religion—The diſtinction between this and the two former ſpecies of allegory; in the nature of the materials: it being allowable in the former to make uſe of imagery from indifferent objects; in this, only ſuch as is derived from things ſacred, or their oppoſites; in the former, the exterior image has no foundation in truth; in the latter, both images are equally true—The difference in the form or manner of treating them—The moſt beautiful form is when the correſponding images run parallel through the whole poem, and mutually illuſtrate each other—Examples of this in the IId *and* LXXIId *Pſalms—The parabolic ſtyle admirably adapted to this ſpecies of allegory; the nature of which renders it the language moſt proper for prophecy—Extremely dark in itſelf, but it is gradually cleared up by the ſeries of events foretold, and more complete revelation; time alſo, which in the general obſcures, contributes to its full explanation.*

THE third ſpecies of Allegory, which alſo prevails much in the prophetic poetry, is when a double meaning is couched under the ſame words; or when the ſame production, according as it is differently interpreted, relates to different events, diſtant in

in time, and diſtinct in their nature. Theſe different relations are termed the Literal and the Myſtical ſenſes; and theſe conſtitute one of the moſt difficult and important topics of Theology. The ſubject is, however, connected alſo with the ſacred poetry, and is therefore deſerving of a place in theſe Lectures.

In the ſacred rites of the Hebrews, things, places, times, offices, and ſuch like, ſuſtain as it were a double character, the one proper or literal, the other allegorical; and in their writings theſe ſubjects are ſometimes treated of in ſuch a manner, as to relate either to the one ſenſe or the other ſingly, or to both united. For inſtance, a compoſition may treat of David, of Solomon, of Jeruſalem, ſo as to be underſtood to relate ſimply either to the city itſelf and its monarchs, or elſe to thoſe objects, which, in the ſacred allegory of the Jewiſh religion, are denoted by that city and by thoſe monarchs: or the mind of the author may embrace both objects at once, ſo that the very words which expreſs the one in the plain, proper, hiſtorical, and commonly-received ſenſe, may typify the other in the ſacred, interior, and prophetic ſenſe.

From

From theſe principles of the Jewiſh religion, this kind of allegory, which I am inclined to call Myſtical, ſeems more eſpecially to derive its origin; and from theſe we muſt endeavour at an explanation of it. But its nature and peculiar properties will probably be more eaſily demonſtrable, if we previouſly define, in what reſpects it is different from the two former ſpecies of allegory.

The firſt remarkable difference is, that in allegories of the kind already noticed, the writer is at liberty to make uſe of whatever imagery is moſt agreeable to his fancy or inclination: there is nothing in univerſal nature, nothing which the mind perceives, either by ſenſe or reflexion, which may not be adapted in the form of a continued metaphor, or even of a parable, to the illuſtration of ſome other ſubject. This latter kind of allegory, on the contrary, can only be ſupplied with proper materials from the ſacred rites of the Hebrews themſelves; nor can it be introduced, except in relation to ſuch things as are directly connected with the Jewiſh religion, or their immediate oppoſites. For to Iſrael, Sion, Jeruſalem, in the allegorical as well as the literal ſenſe, are

are oppoſed Aſſyria, Babylon, Egypt, Idumea; and the ſame oppoſition exiſts in other ſubjects of a ſimilar nature. The two former kinds of allegory are of the ſame general nature with the other figures, and partake of the common privileges of poetry; this latter, or myſtical allegory, has its foundation in the nature of the Jewiſh economy, and is adapted ſolely to the poetry of the Hebrews [a]. Hence that truly Divine Spirit, which has not diſdained to employ poetry as the interpreter of its ſacred will, has alſo in a manner appropriated to its own uſe this kind of allegory, as peculiarly adapted to the publication of future events, and to the typifying of

[a] I admire the perſpicacity of our Author in diſcovering this circumſtance, and his candour in ſo freely diſcloſing his opinion. I am, however, much inclined to ſuſpect thoſe qualities which are ſuppoſed to be altogether peculiar to the ſacred poetry of the Hebrews: and there is, I confeſs, need of uncommon force of argument to convince me, that the ſacred writings are to be interpreted by rules in every reſpect different from thoſe, by which other writings and other languages are interpreted; but in truth this hypotheſis of a double ſenſe being applicable to the ſame words, is ſo far from reſting on any ſolid ground of argument, that I find it is altogether founded on the practice of commentators, and their vague and tralatitious opinions. M.

the

the moſt ſacred myſteries: ſo that ſhould it, on any occaſion, be applied to a profane and common ſubject; being diverted from its proper end, and forced as it were from its natural bias, it would inevitably want all its power and elegance.

There is likewiſe this further diſtinction, that in thoſe other forms of allegory, the exterior or oſtenſible imagery is fiction only; the truth lies altogether in the interior or remote ſenſe, which is veiled as it were under this thin and pellucid covering. But in the allegory, of which we are now treating, each idea is equally agreeable to truth. The exterior or oſtenſible image is not a ſhadowy colouring of the interior ſenſe, but is in itſelf a reality; and although it ſuſtain another character, it does not wholly lay aſide its own. For inſtance, in the metaphor or parable, the Lion, the Eagle, the Cedar, conſidered with reſpect to their identical exiſtence, are altogether deſtitute of reality; but what we read of David, Solomon, or Jeruſalem, in this ſublimer kind of allegory, may be either accepted in a literal ſenſe, or may be myſtically interpreted according to the religion of the Hebrews, and in each view,

view, whether conſidered conjunctly or apart, will be found equally agreeable to truth.

Thus far this kind of allegory differs from the former in the materials, or in the nature of the imagery which it employs; but there is ſome difference alſo in the form or manner of introducing this imagery. I had occaſion before to remark the liberty, which is allowed in the continued metaphor, of mingling the literal with the figurative meaning, that is, the obvious with the remote idea; which is a liberty altogether inconſiſtent with the nature of a parable. But to eſtabliſh any certain rules with regard to this point in the conduct of the myſtical allegory, would be a difficult and hazardous undertaking. For the Holy Spirit has evidently choſen different modes of revealing his ſacred counſels, according to the circumſtances of perſons and times, inciting and directing at pleaſure the minds of his prophets [a]: at one time diſplaying with an unbounded liberality the clear indications of

[a] And yet thoſe metaphors and parables, the laws and principles of which our Author has ſo correctly defined, proceed from the ſame Holy Spirit, and our Author does not deny his being confined by thoſe laws. M.

future

future events; at another imparting ſome obſcure intimations with a ſparing hand. Thus there is a vaſt variety in the uſe and conduct of the myſtical allegory; in the modes in which the correſponding images are arranged, and in which they are obſcured or eclipſed by one another. Sometimes the obvious or literal ſenſe is ſo prominent and conſpicuous, both in the words and ſentiments, that the remote or figurative ſenſe is ſcarcely permitted to glimmer through it [3]. On the other hand, and that more frequently, the figurative ſenſe is found to beam forth with ſo much perſpicuity and luſtre, that the literal ſenſe is quite caſt into a ſhade, or be-

[3] When this happens to be the caſe, how are we to know, that the other ſubject or ſentiment, which our Author deſcribes as almoſt totally eclipſed or extinguiſhed by the ſuperior light, is intended by the writer? If, as I am fully perſuaded, a clear and exact picture of the Meſſiah be exhibited in PSAL. cx. what occaſion is there to apply it alſo to David, who never performed the prieſtly function, nor ever ſat at the right hand of God, that is, in the Holy of Holies, at the right of the Ark of the Covenant? On the contrary, if in PSAL. xviii. the deſcription of David's victories be ſo predominant, as that it can ſcarcely be made to ſpeak any other ſentiment, what occaſion is there to apply it at all to the Meſſiah? M.

comes indiſcernible. Sometimes the principal or figurative idea is exhibited to the attentive eye with a conſtant and equal light; and ſometimes it unexpectedly glares upon us, and breaks forth with ſudden and aſtoniſhing corruſcations, like a flaſh of lightning burſting from the clouds. But the mode or form of this figure, which poſſeſſes the moſt beauty and elegance (and that elegance is the principal object of this diſquiſition) is, when the two images equally conſpicuous run, as it were, parallel through the whole poem, mutually illuſtrating and correſpondent to each other. Though the ſubject be obſcure, I do not fear being able to produce one or two undoubted inſtances of this peculiar excellence, which, if I am not miſtaken, will ſufficiently explain what I have advanced concerning the nature of the myſtical allegory.

The ſubject of the ſecond Pſalm is the eſtabliſhment of David upon the throne, agreeably to the Almighty decree, notwithſtanding the fruitleſs oppoſition of his enemies. The character which David ſuſtains in this poem is twofold, literal and allegorical. If on the firſt reading of the Pſalm

Pſalm we conſider the character of David in the literal ſenſe, the compoſition appears ſufficiently perſpicuous, and abundantly illuſtrated by facts from the ſacred hiſtory. Through the whole, indeed, there is an unuſual fervour of language, a brilliancy of metaphor; and ſometimes the diction is uncommonly elevated, as if to intimate, that ſomething of a more ſublime and important nature lay concealed within; and as if the poet had ſome intention of admitting us to the ſecret receſſes of his ſubject. If, in conſequence of this indication, we turn our minds to contemplate the internal ſenſe, and apply the ſame paſſages to the allegorical David, a nobler ſeries of events is preſented to us, and a meaning not only more ſublime, but even more perſpicuous, riſes to the view. Should any thing at firſt appear bolder and more elevated than the obvious ſenſe would bear, it will now at once appear clear, expreſſive, and admirably adapted to the dignity of the principal ſubject. If, after having conſidered attentively the ſubjects apart, we examine them at length in a united view, the beauty and ſublimity of this moſt elegant

poem will be improved *. We may then perceive the vaſt diſparity of the two images, and yet the continual harmony and agreement that ſubſiſts between them, the amazing reſemblance, as between near relations, in every feature and lineament, and the accurate analogy which is preſerved, ſo that either may paſs for the original, whence the other was copied. New light is reflected upon the diction, and a degree of dignity and importance is added to the ſentiments, whilſt they gradually riſe from humble to more elevated objects, from human to divine, till at length the great ſubject of the poem is placed in the moſt conſpicuous light, and the compoſition attains the higheſt point of ſublimity.

* If, as we learn from the authority of the Apoſtle Paul, this Pſalm relates chiefly to Chriſt, his reſurrection and kingdom; why ſhould we at all apply it to David? I do not deny that the victories of David, as well as of other kings of Jeruſalem, to whom no perſon has thought of applying the poem in queſtion, might be celebrated in language equally bold and powerful: but let us remember, that we have no right to ſay a work has relation to every perſon of whom ſomething ſimilar might be ſaid, but to that perſon alone, who is the actual ſubject of it. If Chriſt, therefore, be the ſubject of this poem, let us ſet aſide David altogether. M.

What

What has been remarked concerning this Pſalm, may be applied with propriety to the ſeventy-ſecond, which exactly reſembles it both in matter and form. It might not improperly be entitled the Inauguration of Solomon. The nature of the allegory is the ſame with the former; the ſtyle is ſomething different, on account of the diſparity of the ſubject. In the one the pomp and ſplendour of victory is diſplayed; in the other the placid image of peace and felicity. The ſtyle of the latter is, therefore, more calm and temperate, more ornamented, more figurative; not abounding in the ſame boldneſs of perſonification as the former, but rather touched with the gay and cheerful colouring of nature, in its moſt flouriſhing and delightful ſtate. From this example ſome light will be thrown upon the nature of the parabolic ſtyle; in particular it will appear admirably adapted to this kind of allegory, on account of its abounding ſo much in this ſpecies of imagery. For as the imagery of nature is equally calculated to expreſs the ideas of divine and ſpiritual, or of human things, a certain analogy being preſerved in each; ſo it eaſily admits that degree of ambiguity, which appears

eſſential to this figure. By theſe means the compoſition is at the ſame time diverſified and perſpicuous, applicable to both ſenſes, and obſcure in neither; and completely comprehending both parts of the allegory, may clearly and diſtinctly be referred to either.

Still, however, a degree of obſcurity muſt occaſionally attend this ſtyle of compoſition; and this obſcurity not only reſults from the nature of the figure, but is even not without its peculiar utility. For the myſtical allegory is on this very account ſo agreeable to the nature of prophecy, that it is the form which the latter generally, and I might add lawfully, aſſumes, as moſt fitted for the prediction of future events. It deſcribes events in a manner exactly conformable to the intention of prophecy; that is, in a dark, diſguiſed, and intricate manner; ſketching out in a general way their form and outline; and ſeldom deſcending to minuteneſs of deſcription, and exactneſs of detail. If on ſome occaſions it expreſly ſignifies any notable circumſtance, it ſeems to be for two principal reaſons[1]: Firſt, that, as generally happens, by ſuddenly withdrawing from our

[1] PSAL. xxii. 17, 18, 19. and lxix. 22.

view

view the literal meaning, the attention may be excited to the inveſtigation of the figurative ſenſe; and ſecondly, that certain expreſs marks, or diſtinguiſhing features, may occaſionally ſhew themſelves, which, after the accompliſhment of the prediction, may be ſufficient to remove every doubt, and to aſſert and confirm, in all points, the truth and divinity of the prophecy [6].

The prophetic, indeed, differs in one reſpect from every other ſpecies of the ſacred poetry: when firſt divulged it is impenetrably obſcure [7]; and time, which darkens every

[6] If there be any one prophecy in the Bible comprizing a double ſenſe, ſurely it is that in ISAIAH, ch. vii. 15, &c. but notwithſtanding the pretended clue to its twofold import, which ſome have flattered themſelves with diſcovering in the ſeparate addreſſes of the Prophet *to the* KING, and *to the* HOUSE OF DAVID.—How little room there is for ſo fanciful an hypotheſis, thoſe may ſee who will refer to Mr. POSTLETHWAITE's elegant diſcourſe on the ſubject. [*Cambridge*, 1781.] S. H.

[7] What our Author has advanced concerning the language of prophecy, is not quite ſo ſatisfactory as I could have wiſhed; for though the accompliſhment of an event predicted be the only certain key to the preciſe application of every term which the prediction contained, yet if there be not ſomething in the words of the prophecy, which

every other compoſition, elucidates it. That obſcurity, therefore, in which at firſt this part of the ſacred writings was involved, is now in a great meaſure removed; there are now many things which the courſe of events (the moſt certain interpreter of prophecy) has completely laid open; from many the Holy Spirit has itſelf condeſcended to remove the veil, with which they were at firſt concealed; many ſacred inſtitutions there are, the reaſon and intent of which are more clearly underſtood, ſince the deſign of the Jewiſh diſpenſation has been more perfectly revealed. Thus it happens, that, inſtructed

at the time of its delivery may ſerve to mark its general import, how ſhall thoſe, to whom it is addreſſed, apply the prediction to its proper object and purpoſe? Our Author traces in the prophetic language an aſſumption of imagery from the Chaos, Creation, Deluge, &c. ſurely then, if the application of figures from theſe topics were appoſite and obvious, they muſt have conveyed the general purport of the prediction which contained them; and inſtead of being deſigned to obſcure its real meaning, were doubtleſs employed for the contrary purpoſe. To me the reaſon of the thing is ſo clear, and our Saviour's practice of referring to former events with this very intent ſo certain, (ſee MATT. xxiv. 15, 37, &c.) that I cannot but conſider it as the moſt prominent characteriſtic of the prophetic language. S. H.

and

and ſupported by theſe aids, of which the ancient Hebrews were deſtitute, and which in truth appear not to have been conceded to the prophets themſelves, we come better accompliſhed for the knowledge and comprehenſion of that part of the ſacred poetry, which is the moſt ſingular in its nature, and by far the moſt difficult of explanation.

LECTURE XII.

OF THE COMPARISON.

Comparisons are introduced for three purposes; illustration, amplification, and variety—For the first an image is requisite, apt, well-known, and perspicuous; it is of little consequence whether it be sublime or beautiful, or neither: hence comparisons from objects which are in themselves mean and humble may be sometimes useful—For the purpose of amplification an image is requisite which is sublime, or beautiful, even though it should be less apt and perspicuous: and on this plea a degree of obscurity, or a remoteness in the resemblance, may sometimes be excused—When variety is the object, splendid, beautiful, and elegant imagery must be sought for; and which has an apt agreement with the object of the comparison in the circumstances or adjuncts, though the objects themselves may be different in kind—The most perfect comparison is that, in which all these excellencies are united—The peculiar form of comparisons in the Hebrew poetry; it results from the nature of the sententious style—They are short, frequent, simple, depending often on a single attribute—Different images displayed in the parallel sentences; many comparisons are arranged in this manner to illustrate the same subject; or different attributes of the same comparison are often distributed in the different divisions or parallelisms.

IN the following Lecture I shall endeavour to treat of the Comparison, which I have classed the third in order of the poetical figures,

figures, with a view of illuſtrating in ſome degree both its general properties, and its peculiar application and force in the poetic compoſitions of the Hebrews.

Compariſons ſerve three diſtinct purpoſes, namely, illuſtration, amplification, and pleaſure or variety [t].

In

[t] If I am not miſtaken, among thoſe writers who enter into the minuteneſs of criticiſm, a diſtinction is obſerved in the uſe of the words *Compariſon*, *Simile*, and *Alluſion*. *Compariſon* ſeems to be not only the general term, which includes the whole claſs, but is more immediately appropriated to a certain ſpecies; I mean the moſt perfect of them, where the reſemblance is minutely traced through all the agreeing parts of the objects aſſimilated.—"Cenſure," ſays Dr. Ogden, in one of his excellent ſermons, "is ſo ſeldom in ſeaſon, that it may not unaptly "be compared to that bitter plant, which comes to ma"turity but in the age of a man, and is ſaid to bloſſom "but once in a hundred years."

Simile ſeems to be a term chiefly appropriated to poetry, and often implies a ſlighter and more fanciful reſemblance than the former word.

A ſpecies of *Compariſon* not extending to a *Simile* is called an *Alluſion*; it chiefly conſiſts in comparing one fact with another. The moſt fanciful and poetical, is, when two facts, bearing a remote reſemblance in a few circumſtances, are compared, a beautiful example of which may be found in one of Dr. Ogden's ſermons.—"If it be the "obſcure, the minute, the ceremonial parts of religion "for

In the firſt place, compariſons are introduced to illuſtrate a ſubject, and to place it in a clearer and more conſpicuous point of view. This is moſt ſucceſsfully effected, when the object which furniſhes the ſimile is familiar and perſpicuous, and when it exactly agrees with that to which it is compared. In this ſpecies of compariſon elevation or beauty, ſublimity or ſplendour, are of little conſequence; ſtrict propriety, and a direct reſemblance, calculated exactly for the explanation of the ſubject, is a ſufficient commendation. Thus Homer very accurately depicts the numbers of the Grecian army, their ardour and eagerneſs for battle, by a compariſon taken from flies collected about a milk-pail [1]; and Virgil compares the diligence

" for which we are contending, though the triumph be " empty, the diſpute is dangerous; like the men of Ai " we purſue, perhaps, ſome little party that flies before " us, and are anxious that not a ſtraggler ſhould eſcape, " but when we look behind us we behold our city in " flames." T.

[1] —— —— —— " thick as inſects play,
" The wandering nation of a ſummer's day,
" That drawn by milky ſtreams at evening hours,
" In gathered ſwarms ſurround the rural bowers;
" From

gence of the Tyrians in building their city, and the variety of their occupations, with the labours of the bees[3]; without in the leaſt degrading the dignity of the Epic Muſe.

I might produce many examples to the purpoſe from the ſacred poetry, but ſhall content myſelf with two or three, than which,

> "From pail to pail with buſy murmur run
> "The gilded legions glittering in the ſun."
>
> POPE's *Hom. Il.* ii. 552.

Mr. Pope has conſiderably elevated this paſſage by the ſplendour of his imagery and diction, "the wandering "nation" and "the gilded legions," each of theſe expreſſions raiſe the image very conſiderably (though I do not altogether approve of this heaping figure upon figure, or rather in this inſtance reverting in the way of metaphor to the firſt object of the compariſon, for "gilded legions" are here actually compared with "gilded legions").—The rural ſcenery alſo, and the pleaſant time of evening, give elegance to an idea very coarſe and diſguſting in itſelf. T.

[3] *Æn.* i. 432. See the uſe to which MILTON has applied the ſame diminutive inſect, *Paradiſe Loſt*, B. i. 768. and the addreſs with which the ſimile is introduced by the expreſſions *thick-ſwarm'd*, &c. in the lines immediately preceding.—No writer was ever ſo great a maſter of amplification as MILTON. For proofs of this aſſertion, in addition to the compariſon juſt referred to, ſee B. i. v. 196—285, &c. B. ii. v. 285, 485, and other paſſages without number. S. H.

both

both as to matter and expreſſion, nothing can be meaner or more vulgar, nothing, however, can be conceived more forcible or expreſſive. Iſaiah introduces the king of Aſſyria inſolently boaſting of his victories:

" And my hand hath found, as a neſt, the riches
" of the peoples:
" And as one gathereth eggs deſerted,
" So have I made a general gathering of the
" earth:
" And there was no one that moved the wing;
" That opened the beak, or that chirped [4]."

And Nahum on a ſimilar ſubject:

" All thy ſtrong-holds ſhall be like fig-trees with
" the firſt ripe figs:
" If they be ſhaken, they fall into the mouth of
" the eater [5]."

There is alſo another compariſon of Iſaiah taken from domeſtic life, very obvious and very common; but which for the gracefulneſs of the imagery, the elegance of the arrangement, and the forcible expreſſion of the tendereſt affections, has never been exceeded:

[4] Isai. x. 14. [5] Nah. iii. 12.

" But

" But Sion ſaith: JEHOVAH hath forſaken me;
" And my Lord hath forgotten me.
" Can a woman forget her ſucking infant;
" That ſhe ſhould have no tenderneſs for the ſon
" of her womb?
" Even theſe may forget;
" But I will not forget thee[6]." There

[6] ISAI. xlix. 14, 15. This ſentiment is moſt beautifully paraphraſed by an elegant Poeteſs of our own times; the excellence of whoſe poetry is her leaſt commendation. I cannot reſiſt the temptation of tranſcribing a few lines, which appear to me at once forcible, intereſting, and ſublime:

Heaven ſpeaks! Oh Nature liſten and rejoice!
Oh ſpread from pole to pole this gracious voice!
" Say every breaſt of human frame, that proves
" The boundleſs force with which a parent loves;
" Say, can a mother from her yearning heart
" Bid the ſoft image of her child depart?
" She! whom ſtrong inſtinct arms with ſtrength to bear
" All forms of ill, to ſhield that deareſt care;
" She! who with anguiſh ſtung, with madneſs wild,
" Will ruſh on death to ſave her threaten'd child;
" All ſelfiſh feelings baniſh'd from her breaſt,
" Her life one aim to make another's bleſt.
" Will ſhe for all ambition can attain,
" The charms of pleaſure, or the lures of gain,
" Betray ſtrong Nature's feelings, will ſhe prove
" Cold to the claims of duty and of love?
" But ſhould the mother, from her yearning heart
" Bid the ſoft image of her child depart;
" Should ſhe unpitying hear his melting ſigh,
" And view unmov'd the tear that fills his eye;

" Yet

There is another ſpecies of compariſon, the principal intent of which is the amplification

" Yet never will the God, whoſe word gave birth
" To yon illumin'd orbs, and this fair earth;
" Who through the boundleſs depths of trackleſs ſpace
" Bade new-wak'd beauty ſpread each perfect grace;
" Yet, when he form'd the vaſt ſtupendous whole,
" Shed his beſt bounties on the human ſoul;
" Which reaſon's light illumes, which friendſhip warms,
" Which pity ſoftens, and which virtue charms,
" Which feels the pure affections generous glow,
" Shares others joy, and bleeds for others woe —
" Oh! never will the general Father prove
" Of man forgetful, man the child of love!"
When all thoſe planets in their ample ſpheres
Have wing'd their courſe, and roll'd their deſtin'd years;
When the vaſt Sun ſhall veil his golden light
Deep in the gloom of everlaſting night;
When wild, deſtructive flames ſhall wrap the ſkies,
When Chaos triumphs, and when Nature dies;
God ſhall himſelf his favour'd creature guide
Where living waters pour their bliſsful tide,
Where the enlarg'd, exulting, wondering mind
Shall ſoar, from weakneſs and from guilt refin'd;
Where perfect knowledge, bright with cloudleſs rays,
Shall gild Eternity's unmeaſur'd days;
Where Friendſhip, unembitter'd by diſtruſt,
Shall in immortal bands unite the juſt;
Devotion rais'd to rapture breathe her ſtrain,
And Love in his eternal triumph reign!

Miſs Williams's *Poems*, Vol. I. p. 107. T.

Analogical

fication of the ſubject; and this is evidently of a different nature from the former:

Analogical poſitions ſerve for the moſt part as illuſtrations, rather than proofs; but no demonſtration of reaſon alone, can ſo cloſely take hold on the heart, as the images contained in this expoſtulation.—For a *mother* to *forget* her SUCKING *infant*, and *feel* no TENDERNESS for the *ſon* of her WOMB, is to be *more* UNNATURAL than even a BRUTE; but impoſſible as it may ſeem that ONE ſuch *mother* ſhould exiſt, yet, were the eſtabliſhed order of nature to be ſo far *ſubverted*, as that EVERY *mother* ſhould become *thus monſtrous*, ſtill the Univerſal Parent will never forget his offspring.

Pliny has mentioned a picture by Ariſtides of "a town "taken by ſtorm, in which was ſeen an infant creeping "to the breaſt of its mother, who, though expiring from "her wounds, yet expreſſes an apprehenſion and fear "leſt, the courſe of her milk being ſtopt, the child ſhould "ſuck her blood."—This picture, it is probable, gave occaſion to the following epigram of Æmilianus, which Mr. Webb (ſee his Beauties of Painting, p. 161) has thus finely tranſlated:

Ἕλκε, ταλαν, παρα μητρος· ὁν ουκ ἐτι μαζον αμελξεις,
Ἑλκυσον ὑστατιον ναμα καταφθιμενης.
Ἠδη γαρ ξιφεεσσι λιποπνοος· αλλα τα μητρος
Φιλτρα και ειν αιδῃ παιδοκομειν εμαθον.

Antholog. Lib. 3.

Suck, little wretch, while yet thy mother lives,
Suck the laſt drop her fainting boſom gives.
She dies; her tenderneſs outlaſts her breath,
And her fond ſoul is provident in death.

S. H.

for, in the firſt place it is neceſſary, that the image which is introduced for the purpoſe of amplifying or enobling a ſubject be ſublime, beautiful, magnificent, or ſplendid, and therefore not trite or common; nor is it by any means neceſſary that the reſemblance be exact in every circumſtance. Thus Virgil has the addreſs to impart even to the labours of his bees a wonderful air of ſublimity, by a compariſon with the exertions of the Cyclops in fabricating the thunderbolts of Jupiter [7]: thus he admirably depicts the grace, the dignity and ſtrength of his Æneas, by comparing him with Apollo on the top of Cynthus renewing the ſacred chorus [8]; or with the mountains Athos, Eryx, and Appenine [9]. Thus alſo Homer [10], in which he is imitated by Virgil [11], compares two heroes ruſhing to battle with Mars and his offſpring Terror advancing from Thrace to the Phlegyans and Ephyrians. But if it ſhould be objected, that

[7] GEORG. iv. 170. [8] *Æn.* iv. 143.

[9] *Æn.* xii. 701. Whoever deſires to ſee this accurately and ſcientifically explained, may conſult an excellent work lately publiſhed by the learned Mr. SPENCE, entitled *Polymetis*, p. 37 and 248. *Author's Note.*

[10] *Il.* xiii. 298. [11] *Æn.* xii. 331.

as compariſons of the former kind are wanting in dignity, ſo theſe (in which familiar objects are compared with objects but little known, or with objects which have little agreement or reſemblance to them) are more likely to obſcure than to illuſtrate; let it be remembered, that each ſpecies of compariſon has in view a different end. The aim of the poet in the one caſe is perſpicuity, to enable the mind clearly to perceive the ſubject, and to comprehend the whole of it at one view; in the other the object is ſublimity, or to impreſs the reader with the idea that the magnitude of the ſubject is ſcarcely to be conceived [1]. When conſidered in this light, it

[1] A ſimile may, however, be taken from an object really inferior, and yet may ſerve to elevate the ſubject; but then the object of the figure muſt poſſeſs ſome of thoſe qualities, which, if they do not heighten our reſpect, will enlarge or vivify the idea. Thus a field of corn on fire is really a more trifling object than a city in flames; yet VIRGIL, *Æn.* ii. v. 406. introduces it ſo artfully, that it not only ſerves to illuſtrate, but to raiſe our idea of the ſack of Troy:

"Thus when a flood of fire by wind is borne,
"Crackling it rolls, and mows the ſtanding corn," &c.
DRYDEN.

it will, I dare preſume, be allowed, that none of theſe forms of compariſon, when rightly applied, is deficient, either in propriety or elegance.

The Hebrews have nothing that correſponds with thoſe fables, to which the Greek and Roman poets have recourſe, when amplification is required: nor can we be ſurprized that imagery ſo conſecrated, ſo dignified by religion and antiquity, and yet of ſo obvious and eſtabliſhed acceptation as to be intelligible to the meaneſt underſtanding, ſhould ſupply abundant and ſuitable materials for this purpoſe. The ſacred poets,

Of this kind alſo is that compariſon of MILTON, in which he likens the ſpears of the angels ſurrounding Satan to a field of corn:

—— —— —— "as thick as when a field
"Of Ceres ripe for harveſt, waving bends
"Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
"Sways them," &c

Par. Loſt, B. iv. 983.

The reaſon why great ſubjects may thus be elevated by a compariſon with ſmaller, appears to be, becauſe the latter, being more familiar to our minds, and therefore eaſier of comprehenſion, make a more diſtinct and forcible impreſſion, and lead the mind gradually to the contemplation and proper conception of the greater objects. T.

therefore,

therefore, reſort in this caſe chiefly to the imagery of nature; and this they make uſe of, indeed, with ſo much elegance and freedom, that we have no cauſe to regret the want of thoſe fictions, to which other nations have recourſe. To expreſs or delineate proſperity and opulence, a compariſon is aſſumed from the cedar or the palm [13]; if the form of majeſty or external beauty is to be depicted, Lebanon or Carmel is preſented to our view [14]. Sometimes they are furniſhed with imagery from their religious rites, at once beautiful, dignified, and ſacred. In both theſe modes, the Pſalmiſt moſt elegantly extols the pleaſures and advantages of fraternal concord:

Sweet as the od'rous balſam pour'd
On Aaron's ſacred head;
Which o'er his beard, and down his breaſt
A breathing fragrance ſhed.

As morning dew on Sion's mount
Beams forth a ſilver ray;
Or ſtuds with gems the verdant pomp,
That Hermon's tops diſplay [15].

Let

[13] PSAL. xcii. 13. NUMB. xxiv. 6. HOS. xiv. 6, 7, 8. AMOS ii. 9. [14] See Lect. VI.

[15] PSAL. cxxxiii. 2, 3. Our Author on this occaſion has quoted from Buchanan's tranſlation. In the above

Let us, however, attend for a moment to Iſaiah, whom no writer has ſurpaſſed in propriety, when his aim is to illuſtrate; or in ſublimity, when he means to amplify his ſubject:

" Wo to the multitude of the numerous peoples,
" Who make a ſound like the ſound of the ſeas:
" And to the roaring of the nations,
" Who make a roaring like the roaring of mighty
" waters.
" Like the roaring of mighty waters do the na-
" tions roar;
" But he ſhall rebuke them, and they ſhall flee
" far away;
" And they ſhall be driven like the chaff of the
" hills before the wind,
" And like the goſſamer before the whirlwind [16]."

The third ſpecies of Compariſon ſeems to hold a middle rank between the two preced-

attempt I have copied Buchanan as nearly as our language would admit. T.

[16] ISAI. xvii. 12, 13. " Theſe five words לאמים כשאון מים כבירים ישאון " ſcripts: with this difference, in two of them, v. 12. " for כבירים we read רבים. So alſo the SYRIAC ver- " ſion, which agrees with them. Theſe five words are " not neceſſary to the ſenſe; and ſeem to be repeated " only by the careleſſneſs of the tranſcriber." K.

Author's Note.

ing:

ing: and the ſole intent of it is, by a mixture of new and varied imagery with the principal matter, to prevent ſatiety or diſguſt, and to promote the entertainment of the reader. It neither deſcends to the humility of the one, nor emulates the ſublimity of the other. It purſues rather the agreeable, the ornamental, the elegant, and ranges through all the variety, all the exuberance of nature. In ſo extenſive a field it would be an infinite taſk to collect all that might be obſerved of each particular. I ſhall remark one circumſtance only, which though it ſometimes take place in the two former ſpecies of compariſon, may be ſaid notwithſtanding to be chiefly appropriated to this laſt.

There are two operations of the mind, evidently contrary to each other. The one conſiſts in combining ideas, the other in ſeparating and diſtinguiſhing them. For in contemplating the innumerable forms of things, one of the firſt reflexions which occurs is, that there are ſome which have an immediate agreement, and ſome which are directly contrary to each other. The mind, therefore, contemplates thoſe objects which have a reſemblance in their univerſal nature

in ſuch a manner, as naturally to inquire whether in any reſpect they ſo diſagree, as to furniſh any mark of diſcrimination; on the contrary, it inveſtigates thoſe which are generally different in ſuch a manner, as to remark whether, in their circumſtances or adjuncts, they may not poſſeſs ſomething in common, which may ſerve as a bond of connexion or aſſociation to claſs or unite them. The final cauſe of the former of theſe operations ſeems to be—to caution and guard us againſt error, in confounding one with another; of the latter, to form a kind of repoſitory of knowledge, which may be reſorted to, as occaſion ſerves, either for utility or pleaſure. Theſe conſtitute the two faculties, which are diſtinguiſhed by the names of judgment and imagination [17]. As accuracy of judgment is demonſtrated by diſcovering in things, which have in general a very ſtrong reſemblance, ſome partial diſagreement; ſo the genius or fancy is entitled to the higheſt commendation, when in thoſe objects, which upon the whole have the leaſt agreement,

[17] See HOBBES *of Human Nature*, c. x. ſect. 4. and LOCKE *of Human Underſtanding*, B. xi. c. 11. ſect. 2.

ſome

ſome ſtriking ſimilarity is traced out [18]. In thoſe compariſons, therefore, the chief purpoſe of which is ornament or pleaſure, thus far may paſs for an eſtabliſhed principle, that they are moſt likely to accompliſh this end, when the image is not only elegant and agreeable, but is alſo taken from an object, which in the general is materially different from the ſubject of compariſon, and only aptly and pertinently agrees with it in one or two of its attributes.

But I ſhall probably explain myſelf better by an example. There is in Virgil a compariſon, borrowed from Homer, of a boiling caldron [19]. Suppoſing in each poet the verſification and deſcription equally elegant; ſtill, as the relation between the things compared is different, ſo the grace and beauty of

[18] "Elegance of expreſſion conſiſts in metaphors, neither too remote, which are difficult to be underſtood; nor too ſimple and ſuperficial, which do not affect the paſſions." ARIST. *Rhet.* iii. 10. "For, as was before obſerved, metaphors muſt be taken from objects that are familiar, yet not too plain and common: As in philoſophy it is a mark of ſagacity to diſcern ſimili-tude even in very diſſimilar things." *Ib.* c. ii. *Author's Note.*

[19] *Æn.* vii. 462. *Il.* xxi. 362.

the

the compariſon is different in the two poets. In Homer the waters of the river Xanthus boiling in their channel by the fire, which Vulcan has thrown into the river, are compared with the boiling of a heated caldron; but Virgil compares with the ſame object the mind of Turnus agitated by the torch of the fury Alecto. The one brings together ideas manifeſtly alike, or rather indeed the ſame, and only differing in circumſtances; the other, on the contrary, aſſimilates objects, which are evidently very different in their nature, but aptly agreeing in ſome of their adjuncts or circumſtances. Thus the compariſon of the Latin poet is new, diverſified, and agreeable; but that of the Greek, although not deſtitute of force in illuſtrating the ſubject, is undoubtedly wanting in all the graces of variety, ornament, and ſplendour.

For the ſame reaſon, there is perhaps no compariſon of any poet extant more ingenious, more elegant or perfect in its kind, than the following of the ſame excellent poet:

" The hero floating in a flood of care,
" Beholds the tempeſt which his foes prepare:
" To different objects turns his anxious mind;
" Thinks, and rejects the counſels he deſign'd;

Explores

" Explores himſelf in vain, in every part,
" And gives no reſt to his diſtracted heart.
" So when the ſun by day, or moon by night,
" Strike on the poliſh'd braſs their trembling
" light,
" The glitt'ring ſpecies variouſly divide,
" And caſt their dubious beams from ſide to ſide:
" Now on the walls, now on the pavement play,
" And to the cieling flaſh the glaring day [20]."

He appears to be indebted for this paſſage to Apollonius Rhodius:

" In ſad review dire ſcenes of horror riſe,
" Quick beats her heart, from thought to thought
" ſhe flies:
" As from the ſtream-ſtor'd vaſe with dubious
" ray
" The ſun-beams dancing from the ſurface play;
" Now here, now there, the trembling radiance
" falls,
" Alternate flaſhing round th' illumin'd walls:
" Thus fluttering bounds the trembling virgin's
" blood,
" And from her eyes deſcends a pearly flood [21]."

In this deſcription, Virgil, as uſual, has much improved upon his original; and particularly

[20] DRYD. *Virg. Æn.* viii. 28.
[21] FAWKES's *Argonautics*, B. iii. 816.

in

in that circumſtance, which is the moſt eſſential of all, that on which the fitneſs of the compariſon depends, and which forms the hinge, as it were, upon which it turns, he has greatly ſurpaſſed the ancient author.

It appears, therefore, that in compariſons, the chief deſign of which is ornament or variety, the principal excellence reſults from the introduction of an image different in kind, but correſpondent in ſome particular circumſtances. There are, however, two capital imperfections, to which this figure is ſometimes liable: one, when objects too diſſimilar, and diſſimilar chiefly in the adjuncts or circumſtances, are forced into compariſon; the other, and not leſs common or important, though perhaps leſs adverted to, when the relation or reſemblance is in general too exact and minute. The compariſon in the one caſe is monſtrous and whimſical [22]; in the other it is groveling and inanimate.

Examples

[22] The principal fault which I have obſerved in the comparisons of the Orientals is, that the reſemblance is often too fanciful and remote. They are, however, not ſingular in this reſpect: the following occurs in one of our

Examples innumerable in illuſtration of the preſent ſubject might be found in the ſacred poetry: I ſhall, however, produce not more than two from Iſaiah. The firſt from the hiſtorical narration of the confederacy between the Syrians and the Iſraelites againſt the kingdom of Judah, "which when it was "told unto the king," ſays the prophet, "his heart was moved, and the hearts of "his people, as the trees of the wood are

our moſt elegant poems, and in my opinion it is in this reſpect very reprehenſible. Deſcribing the Village Clergyman, and his care of his flock, the poet proceeds:

"His ready ſmile a parent's warmth expreſs'd,
"Their welfare pleas'd him, and their cares diſtreſs'd;
"To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
"But all his ſerious thoughts had reſt in heaven.
"As ſome tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
"Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the ſtorm,
"Tho' round its breaſt the rolling clouds are ſpread,
"*Eternal ſunſhine ſettles on his head.*"

Deſerted Village. T.

There is another defect in this paſſage, which perhaps is the real cauſe of that here pointed out, ariſing from the uſe of the term AS, by which the reſemblance between the mountain and the man is announced: not to mention the want of the antithetical *ſo*, which ſhould neceſſarily have introduced a further application of the ſimile.

S. H.

"moved

"moved with the wind [23]." The other is a poetical compariſon, which is fuller and more diffuſe than the cuſtom of the Hebrews generally admits; the ſubject of correſpondent application, however, is perfectly exact. The divine grace [24] and its effects, are compared with

[23] ISAI. vii. 2.

[24] This paſſage of the prophet loſes much of its poetical beauty if it be not rightly underſtood. He is not ſpeaking of that *grace*, which the ſchool divines treat of, and which has been celebrated ſince the time of Auguſtine in ſo many controverſies, nor of the virtue and efficacy of the Goſpel in correcting the morals of mankind, but of the certain accompliſhment of the prophetic word. It was very cuſtomary among the Hebrews to compare the word of God, and particularly the word of prophecy, to a ſhower of rain, DEUT. xxxii. 2. EZEK. xxi. 2. MIC. ii. 6. JOB xxix. 22, 23. When, therefore, it is their intention to deſcribe the certain and inevitable accompliſhment of the divine oracles, they repreſent the earth as impregnated and fertilized by this refreſhing rain. Iſaiah has celebrated in the xlth chapter, as well as in the chapter under our conſideration, ver. 3, 4, and 5, the eternal covenant of God with the Iſraelites, and the accompliſhment of that perpetual and permanent grace which he had ſworn to David, namely, that an eternal and immortal King ſhould ſit upon his throne; and that he ſhould rule and direct the Heathen. If theſe ſhould appear to any perſon above credibility, he adviſes him to recollect that the divine counſels are far above the reach of the human under-

with ſhowers that fertilize the earth: an image which is uniformly appropriated to that purpoſe:

" Verily like as the rain deſcendeth,
" And the ſnow from the heavens;
" And thither it doth not return:
" But moiſteneth the earth,
" And maketh it generate, and put forth its in-
" creaſe;
" That it may give ſeed to the ſower, and bread
" to the eater:

underſtanding; and that thoſe things are eaſy to him, which appear moſt difficult to us. He adds, that the ſacred oracles, however miraculous, will moſt aſſuredly be fulfilled; *that the word of God may be compared to ſnow or rain; which does not return* to heaven, before it has performed its office of *watering and fecundating the earth:* ſo it is with *the prophetic decrees*, or *the divine predictions of future events.* And in this light I underſtand the paſſage from the context, both from what precedes, and what follows. There is one ſimilar in ch. xlv. 8. but the idea is more condenſed, aſſuming rather the form of a metaphor or allegory, than of a compariſon:

" Drop down, O ye heavens, the dew from above;
" And let the clouds ſhower down righteouſneſs:
" Let the earth open her boſom, and let ſalvation pro-
" duce her fruit;
" And let juſtice puſh forth her bud together."

M.

" So

" So ſhall be the word which goeth from my
" mouth;
" It ſhall not return unto me fruitleſs;
" But it ſhall effect, what I have willed;
" And make the purpoſe ſucceed, for which
" I have ſent it [25]."

More examples, and of ſuperior elegance, may be found in the Song of Solomon [26]: it muſt not, indeed, be diſſembled, that there are ſome in that poem, which are very reprehenſible, on account of that general diſſonance, and fanciful agreement, which I have juſt remarked [27] as a great imperfection attending the free uſe of this figure. We muſt be cautious, however, leſt in ſome caſes we charge the poet with errors, which are in reality our own; ſince many of the objects, which ſuggeſted theſe compariſons, are greatly obſcured, and ſome of them removed entirely beyond the ſphere of our knowledge by diſtance of time and place. It is the part of a wiſe man not raſhly to condemn what we are able but partially to comprehend.

[25] ISAI. lv. 10, 11.
[26] See CANT. iv. 1—5. farther explained Lect. XXXI.
[27] See CANT. vii. 2, 4.

Theſe

Theſe three forms, according to which, for the ſake of perſpicuity, I have ventured to claſs compariſons in general, are however not ſo incompatible, that they may not occaſionally meet, and be variouſly blended with each other. That indeed appears to be the moſt perfect compariſon, which combines all theſe different objects, and while it explains, ſerves at the ſame time to amplify and embelliſh the ſubject; and which poſſeſſes evidence and elevation ſeaſoned with elegance and variety. A more complete example is ſcarcely to be found than that paſſage, in which Job impeaches the infidelity and ingratitude of his friends, who in his adverſity denied him thoſe conſolations of tenderneſs and ſympathy, which in his proſperous ſtate, and when he needed them not, they had laviſhed upon him: he compares them with ſtreams, which, increaſed by the rains of winter, overflow their borders, and diſplay for a little time a copious and majeſtic torrent; but with the firſt impulſe of the ſolar beams are ſuddenly dried up, and leave thoſe, who unfortunately wander through the deſerts of Arabia, deſtitute of water, and periſhing with thirſt [21].

[21] Job vi. 15—20.

Thus far of Compariſons in general, and of their matter and intention: it remains to add a few words concerning the particular form and manner, in which the Hebrews uſually exhibit them.

The Hebrews introduce Compariſons more frequently perhaps than the poets of any other nation; but the brevity of them in general compenſates for their abundance. The reſemblance uſually turns upon a ſingle circumſtance; that they explain in the moſt ſimple terms, rarely introducing any thing at all foreign to the purpoſe. The following example, therefore, is almoſt ſingular, ſince it is loaded with an extraordinary acceſſion, or I might almoſt ſay a ſuperfluity of adjuncts:

" Let them be as graſs upon the houſe-top,
" Which, before it groweth up, is withered:
" With which the mower filleth not his hand;
" Nor he that gathereth the ſheaves his boſom:
" Nor do they that paſs by ſay,
" The bleſſing of JEHOVAH be upon you [29];
" We bleſs you in the name of JEHOVAH [30]."

[29] A cuſtomary expreſſion made uſe of in this buſineſs. See RUTH ii. 4.

[30] PSAL. cxxix. 6—8. See alſo PSAL. cxxxiii. 3.

The

The uſual practice of the Hebrews is, indeed, very different from this: ſometimes a ſingle word, and commonly a very ſhort ſentence, comprehends the whole compariſon. This peculiarity proceeds from the nature of the ſententious ſtyle, which is always predominant in the Hebrew poetry, and, as I before remarked, conſiſts in condenſing and compreſſing every exuberance of expreſſion, and rendering it cloſe and pointed. Thus, in the very parts in which other poets are copious and diffuſe, the Hebrews, on the contrary, are brief, energetic, and animated; not gliding along in a ſmooth and equal ſtream, but with the inequality and impetuoſity of a torrent. Thus their compariſons aſſume a peculiar form and appearance; for it is not ſo much their cuſtom to dilate and embelliſh each particular image with a variety of adjuncts, as to heap together a number of parallel and analogous compariſons, all of which are expreſſed in a ſtyle of the utmoſt brevity and ſimplicity. Moſes compares the celeſtial influence of the divine ſong, which he utters by the command of God, with ſhowers which water the fields; and on an occaſion when a Greek or Latin poet

would have been contented with a ſingle compariſon, perhaps a little more diffuſed and diverſified, he has introduced two pairs of ſimiles exactly expreſſive of the ſame thing:

" My doctrine ſhall drop as the rain;
" My language ſhall alight like the dew:
" As the ſmall rain upon the tender herb;
" And like the thick drops upon the graſs[31]."

The Pſalmiſt makes uſe of the ſame form in the following:

" O my God! make them as the chaff whirled
" about;
" As the ſtubble before the wind:
" As the fire burneth the foreſt,
" And as the flame kindleth the mountains;
" So do thou purſue them with thy tempeſts,
" And with thy whirlwind make them afraid[32]."

This

[31] DEUT. xxxii. 2.

[32] PSAL. lxxxiii. 13—15. Between theſe two compariſons there exiſts ſo nice a relation, that they would form one ſimple compariſon, were it not that the ſententious diſtribution of the verſes had diſpoſed the ſubject in a different form and order. Their threſhing-floors were ſo conſtructed in open ſituations, that when the corn was beaten out, the wind carried off the chaff and ſtraw, which

This is, indeed, the moſt common, but by no means the only form which this figure aſſumes in the Hebrew poetry: there is another, in which the compariſon is more diffuſively diſplayed; in which caſe the equal diſtribution of the ſentences is ſtill ſtrictly adhered to; the image itſelf, however, is not repeated, but its attributes, which explain one another in two parallel ſentences; as Moſes has done in a compariſon immediately following that which I juſt now quoted, in which he compares the care and paternal affection of the Deity for his people, with the natural tenderneſs of the eagle for its young:

which being collected together was burnt. See ISAI. v. 24. MATT. iii. 12. and HAMMOND's *Com.* *Jagnar*, however, is uſed for any high and uncultivated place, as appears from MIC. iii. 12. "This ſenſe of the word is "alſo confirmed from the Arabic *Vagnar*, a mountain "ſteep and difficult of acceſs." H. *Author's Note.*

Perhaps it may be thought too free a verſion to render ובסופתך תבהלם,

"And with thy whirlwind involve them in terror"—

but the words themſelves ſeem to comprize no leſs.—*Purſue them with thy tempeſts* is an evident reference *to the diſſipation of the chaff*, and what follows relates clearly to *the expanſion of the flame.* S. H.

" As the eagle ſtirreth up her neſt;
" Fluttereth over her young;
" Expandeth her plumes, taketh them;
" Beareth them upon her wings [33]."

The ſame is obſervable alſo in that moſt elegant compariſon of Job, which I formerly commended; and which for this reaſon I ſhall now quote entire, by way of concluſion:

" My brethren have dealt deceitfully like a
" torrent,
" As the torrents of the vallies they are paſſed
" away;
" Which are congealed [34] by means of the froſt,
" The ſnow hideth itſelf in their ſurface;
" As ſoon as they flow, they are dried up,
" When it is hot they are conſumed from their
" place;
" The paths of their channels are diminiſhed,
" They aſcend in vapour, and are loſt.

[33] DEUT. xxxii. 11.

[34] Or, as Dr. Durell propoſes, *which* STAND STILL; as though the original had been קרורים, inſtead of הקרורים.—For this elegant emendation the learned Doctor is indebted to Father Houbigant, but he forgot to mention its author: Mr. Heath, however, had a better memory. S. H.

" Look

" Look for them, ye troops of Tema;
" Ye travellers of Sheba, expect them earneſtly.
" They made no haſte; becauſe they depended
" on them;
" They came thither, then were they con-
" founded [35]."

[35] JOB vi. 15—20. " In the fifth line the word יזרבו
" is one of thoſe which only once occur in the Scrip-
" ture. In the Arabic and Chaldee, the proper force of
" the verb זרב is *to flow*, to *flow off*, or *to overflow*: thus
" the ſenſe will be, In the *time*, in *which they flow*, or
" *flow off*; that is, are diſſolved by the melting of the
" ice." H.

In the 20th verſe it appears one ſhould read בשחו, with the SYR. and CHALD. *Author's Note.*

LECTURE XIII.

OF THE PROSOPOPOEIA, OR PERSONIFICATION.

Two kinds of Perſonification: when a character is aſſigned to fictitious or inanimate objects; and when a probable ſpeech is attributed to a real perſon—Of fictitious and inanimate characters; of real characters—The Proſopopœia of the mother of Siſera (in the ſong of Deborah) explained: alſo the triumphal ſong of the Iſraelites concerning the death of the king of Babylon, (in Iſaiah) which conſiſts altogether of this figure, and exhibits it in all its different forms.

THE laſt in order of thoſe figures, which I propoſed to treat of, as being moſt adapted to the parabolic ſtyle, is the Proſopopœia, or Perſonification [1]. Of this figure

[1] The paſſions of reſentment and love have been very accurately traced by ſome late writers on the human mind, into the ſenſes of pain and pleaſure; the one ariſing from the habitual inclination to remove what is hurtful; the other from that of poſſeſſing what is a ſource of grateful ſenſations, and a mean of increaſing pleaſure. (See HARTLEY *on Man*, and *a Diſſertation* prefixed to KING'*s Origin of Evil.*) The ſtrong expreſſion of theſe paſſions is, however, chiefly directed to rational, or at leaſt to animated beings; but this is the effect of reaſon and habit. The paſſions

figure there are two kinds. One, when action and character are attributed to fictitious, irrational, or even inanimate objects; the other, when a probable but fictitious ſpeech is aſſigned to a real character. The former evidently partakes of the nature of the Metaphor, and is by far the boldeſt and moſt daring of that claſs of figures. Seaſonably introduced, therefore, it has uncommon force and expreſſion; and in no hands whatever is more ſucceſsful in this reſpect than in thoſe of the Hebrew writers: I may add alſo, that

paſſions are ſtill the ſame, and will frequently diſplay themſelves in oppoſition to reaſon. A child turns to beat the ground, or the ſtone, that has hurt him; (ſee *Lord* KAIMS' *Elements of Criticiſm*;) and moſt men feel ſome degree of affection even for the old inanimate companions of their happineſs. From theſe diſpoſitions originates the figure, which is the great and diſtinguiſhing ornament of poetry, the Proſopopœia. This figure is nearly allied to the Metaphor, and ſtill more to the Metonymy; it is to the latter, what the Allegory is to the Metaphor. Thus when we ſay—"Youth and beauty ſhall be laid in the "duſt," for perſons poſſeſſing youth and beauty, it is hard to determine whether it be a Metonymy or a Proſopopœia. Lyric poetry, in which the imagination ſeems to have the fulleſt indulgence, and which abounds with ſtrong figures, is moſt favourable to Perſonification. T.

none

none more frequently or more freely introduce it.

In the firſt place then, with reſpect to fictitious characters, the Hebrews have this in common with other poets, that they frequently aſſign character and action to an abſtract or general idea, and introduce it in a manner acting, and even ſpeaking as upon the ſtage [a]. In this, while they equal the moſt refined writers in elegance and grace, they greatly excel the moſt ſublime in force and majeſty. What, indeed, can be conceived apter, more beautiful, or more ſublime, than that perſonification of Wiſdom, which Solomon ſo frequently introduces?

[a] There is a very animated perſonification of this kind in one of Dr. Ogden's ſermons, though by ſome it may perhaps be thought too bold for that ſpecies of compoſition.—"Truth," ſays that elegant and ſublime writer, "is indeed of an awful preſence, and muſt not be af-"fronted with the rudeneſs of direct oppoſition; yet will "ſhe ſometimes condeſcend to paſs for a moment unre-"garded, while your reſpects are paid to her ſiſter Cha-"rity." That of Biſhop Sherlock, which our Author has quoted in his admirable Introduction to Engliſh Grammar—"Go to your Natural Religion, lay before her "Mahomet and his diſciples," &c. is well known, and is one of the fineſt examples of this figure I have ever ſeen. T.

exhibiting

exhibiting her not only as the director of human life and morals, as the inventor of arts, as the diſpenſer of wealth, of honour, and of real felicity; but as the immortal offſpring of the omnipotent Creator, and as the eternal aſſociate in the divine counſels:

" When he prepared the heavens, I was preſent;
" When he deſcribed a circle on the face of the
" deep:
" When he diſpoſed the atmoſphere above;
" When he eſtabliſhed the fountains of the deep:
" When he publiſhed his decree to the ſea,
" That the waters ſhould not paſs their bound;
" When he planned the foundations of the earth:
" Then was I by him as his offſpring;
" And I was daily his delight;
" I rejoiced continually before him.
" I rejoiced in the habitable part of his earth,
" And my delights were with the ſons of men [3]."

How admirable is that celebrated perſonification of the divine attributes by the Pſalmiſt? How juſt, elegant, and ſplendid does it appear, if applied only according to the literal ſenſe, to the reſtoration of the Jewiſh nation from the Babyloniſh captivity? but if interpreted as relating to that ſublimer, more ſa-

[3] PROV. viii. 27—31.

cred

cred and myſtical ſenſe, which is not obſcurely ſhadowed under the oſtenſible image, it is certainly uncommonly noble and elevated, myſterious and ſublime:

" Mercy and Truth are met together;
" Righteouſneſs and Peace have kiſſed each
" other [4]."

There are many paſſages of a ſimilar kind, exquiſitely imagined, and, from the boldneſs of the fiction, extremely forcible. Such is that in Habakkuk, of the Peſtilence marching before JEHOVAH when he comes to vengeance [5]: that in Job, in which Deſtruction and Death affirm of Wiſdom, that her fame only had come to their ears [6]: in fine (that I may not be tedious in quoting examples) that tremendous image in Iſaiah, of Hades [7] extending her throat, and opening her inſatiable and immeaſurable jaws [8].

There

[4] PSAL. lxxxv. 11.
[5] HAB. iii. 5.
[6] JOB xxviii. 22.
[7] ISAI. v. 14.

[8] I have not obſerved, even in the Hebrew poetry, a bolder uſe of this figure, than in a paſſage of Tacitus, An. 16, 21. *Trucidatis tot inſignibus viris, ad poſtremum Nero Virtutem ipſam exſcindere concupivit, interfecto Thraſea*, &c. " After the ſlaughter of ſo many excellent men,
" Nero

There is alſo another moſt beautiful ſpecies of perſonification, which originates from a well-

" Nero meditated at length the extirpation of Virtue " herſelf by the ſacrifice of Thraſea," &c.

In the opening of COLLINS's *Ode to Mercy* is a noble example of the Proſopopœia:

" Thou, who ſift'ſt a ſmiling bride,
" By Valour's arm'd and awful ſide," &c.

But the whole compaſs of Engliſh poetry cannot furniſh a more beautiful ſpecimen than the following:

" Loud howls the ſtorm! the vex'd Atlantic roars!
" Thy Genius, Britain, wanders on its ſhores!
" Hears cries of horror waſted from afar,
" The groans of anguiſh, 'mid the ſhrieks of war!
" Hears the deep curſes of the Great and Brave,
" Sigh in the wind, and murmur in the wave!
" O'er his damp brow the ſable crape he binds,
" And throws his victor-garland to the winds."

Miſs SEWARD's *Monody on Major André.*

How different are theſe inſtances from the frigid attempts of inferior writers! The following perſonification is completely ridiculous. It is, however, extracted from a poem, which has been highly extolled by one who calls himſelf a Critic:

" Invidous *Grave*, how doſt thou rend in ſunder
" Whom love has knit, and ſympathy made one?"

The Grave, a Poem.

It is a happy thing, that as there are poets of all degrees, there are alſo Critics of taſte and judgment, exactly equal and

well-known Hebrew idiom, and on that account is very familiar to us; I allude to that

and correſpondent to them.—*Par nobile!* The picture of a *Grave rending a thing in ſunder*, can only be matched by the following paſſages, from the ſame incomparable performance:

——————— " But! tell us, why this waſte,
" Why this *ado* in *earthing* up a carcaſe
" That's fallen into diſgrace, and to the ſenſe
" Smells horrible? Ye *undertakers!* tell us"——

" Where are the mighty thunderbolts of war?
" Alas! how *ſlim*, *diſhonourably ſlim!*"

" Now tame and humble, *like a child that's whipp'd*,
" Shake hands with duſt," &c.

" Perhaps *ſome hackney*, *hunger-bitten ſcribbler*
" Inſults thy memory."

" Here the lank-ſided miſer—worſt of felons!
" Who meanly ſtole (diſcreditable ſhift!)
" From back and belly too their proper cheer,
" Lies cheaply lodged."

" O that ſome courteous ghoſt would *blab* it out,
" What 'tis ye are," &c.

——————— " O great *Man-eater!*
" Whoſe every day is carnival, not faſted yet!
" Like one, whole days defrauded of his meals,
" On whom lank hunger lays his ſkinny hand."

No wonder the above *Critic* could diſcover nothing ſublime in Virgil and the Scriptures. T.

form

form of expreſſion, by which the ſubject, attribute, accident, or effect of any thing is denominated the Son. Hence in the Hebrew poetry, nations, regions, peoples, are brought upon the ſtage as it were in a female character:

" Deſcend, and ſit in the duſt, O virgin, daughter
" of Babylon;
" Sit on the bare ground without a throne, O
" daughter of the Chaldeans [9]:

[9] " Sitting on the ground was a poſture that denoted " deep miſery and diſtreſs. The Prophet JEREMIAH has " given it the firſt place among many indications of ſorrow, " in that elegant deſcription of the diſtreſs of his country, " (LAM. ii. 8.) " The elders of the daughter of Sion ſit on " the ground, they are ſilent," &c. " *We find Judea,*" " ſays Mr. ADDISON, (on Medals, Dial. ii.) " *on ſeveral* " *coins of Veſpaſian and Titus, in a poſture that denotes ſor-* " *row and captivity.—I need not mention her ſitting on the* " *ground, becauſe we have already ſpoken of the aptneſs of* " *ſuch a poſture to repreſent extreme affliction. I fancy* " *the Romans might have an eye to the cuſtoms of the Jewiſh* " *nation, as well as thoſe of their country, in the ſeveral* " *marks of ſorrow they have ſet on this figure. The Pſalmiſt* " *deſcribes the Jews lamenting their captivity in the ſame* " *penſive poſture:* " *By the waters of Babylon we ſat down* " *and wept, when we remembered thee, O Sion.*" *But what* " *is more remarkable, we find Judea repreſented as a woman* " *in ſorrow ſitting on the ground, in a paſſage of the prophet,* " *that foretels the very captivity recorded on this medal.*"
See Biſhop LOWTH's Notes on *Iſaiah*, c. iii. v. 26.

" For

" For thou ſhalt no longer be called the tender
" and the delicate [10]."

Lo! Sion's daughter proſtrate on the earth,
All mournful, ſolitary, weeping, lies!
In vain her ſuppliant hands to heaven extends;
She ſinks deſerted, and no comfort finds [11].

Unleſs we attend to this peculiar phraſeology, ſuch expreſſions as the " Sons of the bow [12]" " and of the quiver [13]" for arrows, will ſeem extremely harſh and unnatural; as well as that remarkable perſonification of Job, denoting the moſt miſerable death, " The firſt-" born of the progeny of Death [14]."

The parabolic ſtyle no leſs elegantly aſſigns a character and action to inanimate objects than to abſtract ideas. The holy prophets, moved with juſt indignation againſt the ungrateful people of God, " obteſt the Heavens " and the Earth, and command univerſal " Nature to be ſilent [15]. They plead their " cauſe before the Mountains, and the Hills " liſten to their voice [16]." All is animated and informed with life, ſoul, and paſſion:

[10] Isai. xlvii. 1, &c. [11] Lam. i. 1, &c.
[12] Job xli. 19. [13] Lam. iii. 13. [14] Job xviii. 13.
[15] Deut. xxxii. 1. Isai. i. 2. [16] Mic. vi. 1.

" Let

" Let the Heavens rejoice, and let the Earth be
" glad;
" And let them proclaim through the nations,
" JEHOVAH reigneth.
" Let the Sea roar, and all that it containeth [17];
" The World, and the inhabitants thereof:
" Let the Floods clap their hands;
" Let the Mountains break forth into harmony [18]:
" Before JEHOVAH, for he cometh,
" For he cometh to judge the earth [19]."

" The Waters ſaw thee, O God!
" The Waters ſaw thee, they were grievouſly
" troubled [20];
" The Deep uttered his voice;
" And lifted up his hands on high [21]."

And Job admirably in the ſame ſtyle:

" Canſt thou ſend forth the Lightnings, and will
" they go?
" Shall they ſay unto thee, Behold here we are [22]?"

With equal ſucceſs they introduce objects, which have no exiſtence in the order and economy of nature; though it muſt be confeſſed, that it is attended with much greater

[17] 1 CHRON. xvi. 31.
[18] PSAL. xcviii. 7, 8.
[19] PSAL. xcvi. 13.
[20] PSAL. lxxvii. 16.
[21] HABAK. iii. 10.
[22] Chap. xxxviii. 35.

hazard of propriety; for to thoſe, which are within the province of nature, we readily attribute a degree of life and ſentiment. Of this the following dialogue in Jeremiah is an admirable ſpecimen:

" Ho! Sword of JEHOVAH!
" How long wilt thou not be at reſt?
" Return into thy ſcabbard,
" Return, and be ſtill.
" How can it be at reſt,
" Since JEHOVAH hath given it a charge?
" Againſt Aſkelon, and againſt the ſea-coaſt,
" There hath he appointed it [21]."

The other kind of Proſopopœia, to which I alluded in the former part of this Lecture, is that, by which a probable but fictitious ſpeech is aſſigned to a real perſon. As the former is calculated to excite admiration and approbation by its novelty, boldneſs, and variety; ſo the latter, from its near reſemblance to real life, is poſſeſſed of great force, evidence and authority.

It would be an infinite taſk to ſpecify every inſtance in the ſacred poems, which on this occaſion might be referred to as worthy of

[21] JER. xlvii. 6, 7.

notice;

notice; or to remark the eaſy, the natural, the bold and ſudden perſonifications; the dignity, importance, and impaſſioned ſeverity of the characters. It would be difficult to deſcribe the energy of that eloquence which is attributed to JEHOVAH himſelf, and which appears ſo ſuitable in all reſpects to the Divine Majeſty; or to diſplay the force and beauty of the language which is ſo admirably and peculiarly adapted to each character; the probability of the fiction; and the excellence of the imitation. One example, therefore, muſt ſuffice for the preſent; one more perfect it is not poſſible to produce. It is expreſſive of the eager expectation of the mother of Siſera, from the inimitable ode of the propheteſs Deborah [24].

The firſt ſentences exhibit a ſtriking picture of maternal ſolicitude, both in words and actions; and of a mind ſuſpended and agitated between hope and fear:

" Through the window ſhe looked and cried out,
" The mother of Siſera, through the lattice:
" Wherefore is his chariot ſo long in coming?
" Wherefore linger the wheels of his chariot?"

[24] JUD. v. 28—30.

Immediately, impatient of his delay, ſhe anticipates the conſolations of her friends, and her mind being ſomewhat elevated, ſhe boaſts with all the levity of a fond female;

(Vaſt in her hopes and giddy with ſucceſs;)
" Her wiſe ladies anſwer her;
" Yea, ſhe returns anſwer to herſelf:
" Have they not found?—Have they not di-
" vided the ſpoil?"

Let us now obſerve, how well adapted every ſentiment, every word is to the character of the ſpeaker. She takes no account of the ſlaughter of the enemy, of the valour and conduct of the conqueror, of the multitude of the captives, but

Burns with a female thirſt of prey and ſpoils.

Nothing is omitted, which is calculated to attract and engage the paſſions of a vain and trifling woman, ſlaves, gold, and rich apparel. Nor is ſhe ſatisfied with the bare enumeration of them; ſhe repeats, ſhe amplifies, ſhe heightens every circumſtance; ſhe ſeems to have the very plunder in her immediate poſſeſſion; ſhe pauſes and contemplates every particular:

" Have

" Have they not found?—Have they not di-
" vided the ſpoil?
" To every man a damſel, yea a damſel or two?
" To Siſera a ſpoil of divers colours?
" A ſpoil of needlework of divers colours,
" A ſpoil for the neck [25] of divers colours of
" needlework on either ſide."

To add to the beauty of this paſſage, there is alſo an uncommon neatneſs in the verſification, great force, accuracy, and perſpicuity in the diction, the utmoſt elegance in the repetitions, which, notwithſtanding their apparent redundancy, are conducted with the moſt perfect brevity. In the end, the fatal diſappointment of female hope and credulity, tacitly inſinuated by the ſudden and unexpected apoſtrophe,

" So let all thine enemies periſh, O JEHOVAH!"

[25] לצואר שלל, " A ſpoil to ornament the neck;" is the conſtructive for the abſolute. See MIC. vi. 16. LAM. iii. 14. and 66. For further ſatisfaction on this ſubject conſult BUXTORF, *Theſ. Gram.* ii. 4. who, nevertheleſs, in the ſame work, interprets this phraſe in a different manner. The SEVENTY read לצוארי; and the SYRIAC שולל; the context will bear either.

Author's Note.

is expreſſed more forcibly by this very ſilence of the perſon who was juſt ſpeaking, than it could poſſibly have been by all the powers of language.

But whoever wiſhes to underſtand the full force and excellence of this figure, as well as the elegant uſe of it in the Hebrew ode, muſt apply to Iſaiah, whom I do not ſcruple to pronounce the ſublimeſt of poets. He will there find, in one ſhort poem, examples of almoſt every form of the Proſopopœia, and indeed of all that conſtitutes the ſublime in compoſition. I truſt it will not be thought unſeaſonable to refer immediately to the paſſage itſelf, and to remark a few of the principal excellencies [26].

The prophet, after predicting the liberation of the Jews from their ſevere captivity in Babylon, and their reſtoration to their own country, introduces them as reciting a kind of triumphal ſong upon the fall of the Babyloniſh monarch, replete with imagery, and with the moſt elegant and animated perſonifications. A ſudden exclamation, expreſſive of their joy and admiration on the unexpected revolution in their affairs, and

[26] Isai. xiv. 4—27.

the

the deſtruction of their tyrants, forms the exordium of the poem. The Earth itſelf triumphs with the inhabitants thereof; the Fir-trees, and the Cedars of Lebanon (under which images the parabolic ſtyle frequently delineates the kings and princes of the Gentiles) exult with joy, and perſecute with contemptuous reproaches the humbled power of a ferocious enemy:

" The whole Earth is at reſt, is quiet; they
" burſt forth into a joyful ſhout:
" Even the Fir-trees rejoice over thee, the Ce-
" dars of Lebanon:
" Since thou art fallen, no feller hath come up
" againſt us[27]."

This is followed by a bold and animated perſonification of Hades, or the infernal regions. Hades excites his inhabitants, the ghoſts of princes, and the departed ſpirits of

[27] Thus ſpiritedly verſified by Mr. POTTER:

The lordly Lebanon waves high
The ancient honours of his ſacred head;
Their branching arms his cedars ſpread,
His pines triumphant ſhoot into the ſky:
" Tyrant, no barb'rous axe invades
" Since thou art fallen, our unpierc'd ſhades."

See the concluſion of Lect. xxviii. T.

kings: they riſe immediately from their ſeats, and proceed to meet the monarch of Babylon; they inſult and deride him, and comfort themſelves with the view of his calamity:

"Art thou, even thou too, become weak as we?
"Art thou made like unto us?
"Is then thy pride brought down to the grave;
"the ſound of thy ſprightly inſtruments?
"Is the vermin become thy couch, and the earth-
"worm thy covering?"

Again, the Jewiſh people are the ſpeakers, in an exclamation after the manner of a funeral lamentation, which indeed the whole form of this compoſition exactly imitates [28]. The remarkable

[28] Threnetic ſtrains on the untimely deceaſe of royal and eminent perſonages, were of high antiquity amongſt the Aſiatics. Thus Euripides: (Iphigenia in Tauris, v. 177.)

Ch. Αντιψαλμους ωδας,
Ὑμνον τ' ΑΣΙΗΤΑΝ σοι,
Βαρβαρον ιαχαν,
Δεσποινα Γ' ιξαυδασω,
Ταν εν ΘΡΗΝΟΙΣΙΝ μυσαν,
Νεκυσιν μελεον·

And

remarkable fall of this powerful monarch is thus beautifully illuſtrated:

"How

And again, Oreſtes, v. 1402.

ΑΙΛΙΝΟΝ, ΑΙΛΙΝΟΝ, ΑΡΧΑΝ, ΘΑΝΑΤΟΥ.
Βαρβαροι λεγουσιν, ΑΙ, ΑΙ,
Ασιαδι φωνᾳ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ
Ξιφεσι σιδαρεοσιν αϊδα.

Inſtances of ſuch threnodies often occur in the ſacred writings. [2 SAM. i. 18. 2 KINGS xiii. 30. AMOS v. 1, 2, 16. JER. ix. 17. xxii. 18, &c.] Many of them are of the proleptic caſt, the moſt conſpicuous of which is the denunciation of Iſaiah againſt the king of Babylon. According to the Seventy, משל in the 4th verſe (which our Tranſlators have rendered a *proverb* or *taunting ſpeech*) ſignifies ὁ ΘΡΗΝΟΣ and ΑΡΧΗ. The ſame expreſſion, taken conjunctively with מות, hath been alſo interpreted ΑΡΧΗ ΘΑΝΑΤΟΥ, and coincides with the paſſage from the Oreſtes, cited above.—Gray's *Bard* is a compoſition of the ſame claſs, as is evident from the import of ΑΙΛΙΝΟΣ [— ἡ μεντοι εξ Επιχαρμου χρησις εθελουσα τον ΑΙΛΙΝΟΝ ΩΔΗΝ των ΙΣΤΟΥΡΓΟΥΝΤΩΝ ΕΙΝΑΙ. Euſtath.] when compared with his imagery of WEAVING ——

"Weave the warp and weave the woof,
"The winding-ſheet of Edward's race," &c.

and it is ſomewhat remarkable that, in his Ode from the Norſe-tongue, intitled the *Fatal Siſters*, the ſame machinery is more minutely preſerved:

"Now the ſtorm begins to lower
"(Haſte the loom of hell prepare,)
"Iron-ſleet of arrowy ſhower
"Hurtles in the darken'd air.

"Glittering

" How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer,
" ſon of the morning [29]!
" Art cut down from earth, thou that didſt ſub-
" due the nations!"

" Glittering lances form the loom
" Where the duſky warp we ſtrain;
" Weaving many a ſoldier's doom,
" Orkney's woe, and Randver's bane.

" See the grieſly texture grow;
" ('Tis of human entrails made)
" And the weights, that play below,
" Each a gaſping warrior's head.

" Shafts for ſhuttles," &c.

In his critique upon this ſublime Ode of Iſaiah, the learned Biſhop appears to have overlooked a principal ſource of its beauty; which conſiſts in the happy adaptation of imagery from the hiſtory and fate of Nimrod, the founder and firſt king of Babylon, to prefigure the exciſion of his ſucceſſor and repreſentative. See *Diſſertation on the controverted Paſſages in St. Peter and St. Jude concerning the Angels that ſinned.* S. H.

[29] *O Lucifer!* &c.] This is, I think, the moſt ſublime image I have ever ſeen conveyed in ſo few words. The aptneſs of the allegory to expreſs the ruin of a powerful monarch, by the fall of a bright ſtar from heaven, ſtrikes the mind in the moſt forcible manner; and the poetical beauty of the paſſage is greatly heightened by the perſonification, " *Son* of the morning." Whoever does not reliſh ſuch painting as this, is not only deſtitute of poetical taſte, but of the common feelings of humanity. T.

He himſelf is at length brought upon the ſtage, boaſting in the moſt pompous terms of his own power, which furniſhes the poet with an excellent opportunity of diſplaying the unparalleled miſery of his downfal. Some perſons are introduced, who find the dead carcaſs of the king of Babylon caſt out and expoſed; they attentively contemplate it, and at laſt ſcarcely know it to be his:

"Is this the man, that made the earth to trem-
"ble; that ſhook the kingdoms?
"That made the world like a deſert; that de-
"ſtroyed the cities[30]."

They reproach him with being denied the common rites of ſepulture, on account of the cruelty and atrocity of his conduct; they execrate his name, his offſpring, and their poſterity. A ſolemn addreſs, as of the Deity himſelf, cloſes the ſcene, and he denounces againſt the king of Babylon, his poſterity, and even againſt the city, which was the ſeat

[30] XENOPHON gives an inſtance of this king's wanton cruelty in killing the ſon of Gobrias, on no other provocation than that, in hunting, he ſtruck a boar and a lion, which the king had miſſed. *Cyrop.* iv. p. 309, quoted by Biſhop LOWTH, *Notes on Iſaiah*, p. 98. T.

of

of their cruelty, perpetual deſtruction, and confirms the immutability of his own counſels by the ſolemnity of an oath.

How forcible is this imagery, how diverſified, how ſublime! how elevated the diction, the figures, the ſentiments!—The Jewiſh nation, the Cedars of Lebanon, the Ghoſts of departed kings, the Babyloniſh monarch, the Travellers who find his corpſe, and laſt of all JEHOVAH himſelf, are the characters which ſupport this beautiful Lyric Drama. One continued action is kept up, or rather a ſeries of intereſting actions are connected together in an incomparable whole: this, indeed, is the principal and diſtinguiſhed excellence of the ſublimer ode, and is diſplayed in its utmoſt perfection in this poem of Iſaiah, which may be conſidered as one of the moſt ancient, and certainly the moſt finiſhed ſpecimen of that ſpecies of compoſition, which has been tranſmitted to us. The perſonifications here are frequent, yet not confuſed; bold, yet not improbable: a free, elevated, and truly divine ſpirit pervades the whole; nor is there any thing wanting in this ode to defeat its claim to the character of perfect beauty and ſublimity.

ſublimity. If, indeed, I may be indulged in the free declaration of my own ſentiments on this occaſion, I do not know a ſingle inſtance in the whole compaſs of Greek and Roman poetry, which, in every excellence of compoſition, can be ſaid to equal, or even to approach it.

LECTURE XIV.

OF THE SUBLIME IN GENERAL [1], AND OF SUBLIMITY OF EXPRESSION IN PARTICULAR.

III. *In what manner the word* Maſhal *implies the idea of Sublimity—Sublimity of language and ſentiment—On what account the poetic diction of the Hebrews, either conſidered in itſelf, or compared with proſe compoſition, merits an appellation expreſſive of ſublimity—The ſublimity of the poetic diction ariſes from the paſſions—How far the poetic diction differs from proſe among the Hebrews—Certain forms of poetic diction and conſtruction exemplified from* Jon, Ch. iii.

HAVING in the preceding Lecture, given my ſentiments at large on the nature of the figurative ſtyle, on its uſe and application

[1] An author whoſe taſte and imagination will be reſpected as long as the Engliſh language exiſts, has written a moſt elegant treatiſe on the diſtinction between the *beautiful* and the *ſublime*. But after all that has been ſaid, our feelings muſt be the only criterion. The pleaſure which is afforded by the contemplation of beauty, appears to be a pure and unmixed pleaſure, ariſing from the gentler agitation, and is leſs vivid than that which is produced by the ſublime. For as the latter often borders upon terror, it requires a greater exertion, and produces a ſtronger, though

application in poetry, and particularly in the poetry of the Hebrews; I proceed to treat of the Sublimity of the ſacred poets; a ſubject which has been already illuſtrated by many examples quoted upon other occaſions; but which, ſince we have admitted it as a third characteriſtic of the poetic ſtyle, now requires

though I think leſs durable ſenſation than the beautiful. We may read an elegant author, and continue for a long time to be pleaſed with his beauties; a ſublime author we ſhall ſoon be induced to lay down.

The *ſublime* alſo differs from the *beautiful* in being only converſant with great objects. It differs from the *pathetic* in affording a more tranquil pleaſure, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf. But though the ſublime and beautiful be thus diſtinguiſhable, yet they are frequently mixed in the ſame paſſage, and ſeem to run into each other, as is the caſe in that enchanting ſimile of Homer, into which Mr. Pope has transfuſed more of the beautiful than is in the original:

"As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night," &c.

Some deſcriptions alſo it is not eaſy to determine whether to aſſign to the *ſublime* or the *pathetic*: ſuch is that admirable but brief delineation of the feelings of the multitude on the crucifixion of our Lord, LUKE xxiii. 48. "And all the people that came together to that ſight, "beholding the things which were done, ſmote their "breaſts, and returned." This may in ſome meaſure account for the error of Longinus, who confounds theſe three different ſenſations together. T.

to

to be diſtinctly explained. We have already ſeen, that this is implied in one of the ſenſes of the word *Maſhal*, it being expreſſive of power, or ſupreme authority, and when applied to ſtyle, ſeems particularly to intimate ſomething eminent or energetic, excellent or important. This is certainly underſtood in the phraſe "to take (or lift) up his para-"ble;" that is, to expreſs a great or lofty ſentiment. The very firſt inſtance, in which the phraſe occurs, will ſerve as an example in point. For in this manner Balaam "took "up," as our tranſlation renders it, "his "parable, and ſaid:"

"From Aram I am brought by Balak,
"By the king of Moab from the mountains of
"the Eaſt:
"Come, curſe me Jacob;
"And come, execrate Iſrael.
"How ſhall I curſe whom God hath not curſed?
"And how ſhall I execrate whom God hath not
"execrated?
"For from the tops of the rocks I ſee him,
"And from the hills I behold him;
"Lo! the people, who ſhall dwell alone,
"Nor ſhall number themſelves among the na-
"tions!

"Who

"Who ſhall count the duſt of Jacob?
"Or the number of the fourth of Iſrael?
"Let my ſoul die the death of the righteous,
"And let my end be as his[z]."

Let us now conſider, on what account this addreſs of the prophet is entitled *Maſhal*. The ſentences are indeed accurately diſtributed in parallelifms, as may be diſcovered even in the tranſlation, which has not entirely obſcured the elegance of the arrangement: and compoſitions in this form, we have already remarked, are commonly claſſed among the proverbs and adages, which are properly called *Maſhalim*, though perhaps they contain nothing of a proverbial or didactic nature. But if we attentively conſider this very paſſage, or others introduced by the ſame form of expreſſion, we ſhall find,

[z] NUMB. xxiii. 7—10. אחרית here rendered *end*, and in the common verſion *latter end*, properly ſignifies *poſterity*; as in PSAL. cix. 13. AMOS iv. 2. DAN. xi. 4.—The SEVENTY tranſlate it by σπερμα. It ſhould be remembered that Balaam is here ſpeaking of the *Righteous* not in their *individual*, but in their *aggregate* capacity, and therefore had either a retroſpect, in his wiſh, to the promiſe which had been made to Abraham concerning his poſterity; or elſe, to an immediate communication on the occaſion then preſent. S. H.

in all of them, either an extraordinary variety of figure and imagery; or an elevation of ſtyle and ſentiment; or perhaps an union of all theſe excellencies; which will induce us to conclude, that ſomething more is meant by the term to which I am alluding than the bare merit of a ſententious neatneſs. If again we examine the ſame paſſage in another point of view, we ſhall diſcover in it little or nothing of the figurative kind, at leaſt according to our ideas, or according to that acceptation of the word *Maſhal* which denotes figurative language; there is evidently nothing in it of the myſtical kind, nothing allegorical, no pomp of imagery, no compariſon, and in fourteen verſes but a ſingle metaphor: as far, therefore, as figurative language is a characteriſtic of the parabolic ſtyle, this is no inſtance of it. We muſt then admit the word Parable, when applied to this paſſage, to be expreſſive of thoſe exalted ſentiments, that ſpirit of ſublimity, that energy and enthuſiaſm, with which the anſwer of the prophet is animated. By this example I wiſhed to explain on what reaſons I was induced to ſuppoſe that the term *Maſhal*, as well from its proper power or meaning, as from its uſual acceptation,

acceptation, involves an idea of ſublimity; and that the Hebrew poetry expreſſes in its very name and title, the particular quality in which it ſo greatly excels the poetry of all other nations.

The word Sublimity I wiſh in this place to be underſtood in its moſt extenſive ſenſe: I ſpeak not merely of that ſublimity, which exhibits great objects with a magnificent diſplay of imagery and diction; but that force of compoſition, whatever it be, which ſtrikes and overpowers the mind, which excites the paſſions, and which expreſſes ideas at once with perſpicuity and elevation; not ſolicitous whether the language be plain or ornamented, refined or familiar: in this uſe of the word I copy Longinus, the moſt accompliſhed author on this ſubject, whether we conſider his precepts or his example [1].

The ſublime conſiſts either in language or ſentiment, or more frequently in an union of both, ſince they reciprocally aſſiſt each other, and ſince there is a neceſſary and indiſſoluble connexion between them: this, however,

[1] "Whoſe own example ſtrengthens all his laws,
"And is himſelf the great ſublime he draws."
POPE.

however, will not prevent our conſidering them apart with convenience and advantage. The firſt object, therefore, which preſents itſelf for our inveſtigation, is, upon what grounds the poetic diction of the Hebrews, whether conſidered in itſelf, or in compariſon with proſe compoſition, is deſerving of an appellation immediately expreſſive of ſublimity.

The poetry of every language has a ſtyle and form of expreſſion peculiar to itſelf; forcible, magnificent, and ſonorous; the words pompous and energetic; the compoſition ſingular and artificial; the whole form and complexion different from what we meet with in common life, and frequently (as with a noble indignation) breaking down the boundaries by which the popular dialect is confined. The language of Reaſon is cool, temperate, rather humble than elevated, well arranged and perſpicuous, with an evident care and anxiety leſt any thing ſhould eſcape which might appear perplexed or obſcure. The language of the Paſſions is totally different: the conceptions burſt out in a turbid ſtream, expreſſive in a manner of the internal conflict; the more vehement break

out

out in haſty confuſion; they catch (without ſearch or ſtudy) whatever is impetuous, vivid, or energetic. In a word, Reaſon ſpeaks literally, the Paſſions poetically. The mind, with whatever paſſion it be agitated, remains fixed upon the object that excited it; and while it is earneſt to diſplay it, is not ſatisfied with a plain and exact deſcription; but adopts one agreeable to its own ſenſations, ſplendid or gloomy, jocund or unpleaſant. For the paſſions are naturally inclined to amplification; they wonderfully magnify and exaggerate whatever dwells upon the mind, and labour to expreſs it in animated, bold, and magnificent terms. This they commonly effect by two different methods; partly by illuſtrating the ſubject with ſplendid imagery, and partly by employing new and extraordinary forms of expreſſion, which are indeed poſſeſſed of great force and efficacy in this reſpect eſpecially, that they in ſome degree imitate or repreſent the preſent habit and ſtate of the ſoul. Hence thoſe theories of Rhetoricians, which they have ſo pompouſly detailed, attributing that to art, which above all things is due to nature alone:

" For nature to each change of fortune forms
" The ſecret ſoul, and all its paſſions warms:
" Tranſports to rage, dilates the heart with mirth,
" Wrings the ſad ſoul, and bends it down to earth.
" The tongue theſe various movements muſt ex-
" preſs [4]."——

A principle which pervades all poetry, may eaſily be conceived to prevail even in a high degree in the poetry of the Hebrews. Indeed we have already ſeen how daring theſe writers are in the ſelection of their imagery, how forcible in the application of it; and what elegance, ſplendour, and ſublimity they have by theſe means been enabled to infuſe into their compoſitions. With reſpect to the diction alſo, we have had an opportunity of remarking the peculiar force and dignity of their poetic dialect; as well as the artificial diſtribution of the ſentences, which appears to have been originally cloſely connected with the metrical arrangement, though the latter be now totally loſt. We are therefore in the next place to conſider whether there be any other remarkable qualities in the poetical language of the Hebrews, which ſerve to diſtinguiſh it from proſe compoſition.

[4] FRANCIS's HOR. *Art of Poetry*, v. 155, &c.

It

It is impoſſible to conceive any thing more ſimple and unadorned than the common language of the Hebrews. It is plain, correct, chaſte, and temperate; the words are uncommon neither in their meaning nor application; there is no appearance of ſtudy, nor even of the leaſt attention to the harmony of the periods. The order of the words is generally regular and uniform. The verb is the firſt word in the ſentence, the noun, which is the agent, immediately ſucceeds, and the other words follow in their natural order. Each circumſtance is exhibited at a ſingle effort, without the leaſt perplexity or confuſion of the different parts: and, what is remarkable, by the help of a ſimple particle, the whole is connected from the beginning to the end in a continued ſeries, ſo that nothing appears inconſiſtent, abrupt, or confuſed. The whole compoſition, in fine, is diſpoſed in ſuch an order, and ſo connected by the continued ſucceſſion of the different parts, as to demonſtrate clearly the regular ſtate of the author, and to exhibit the image of a ſedate and tranquil mind. But in the Hebrew poetry the caſe is different, in part at leaſt, if not in the whole. The free ſpirit

is hurried along, and has neither leiſure nor inclination to deſcend to thoſe minute and frigid attentions. Frequently, inſtead of diſguiſing the ſecret feelings of the author, it lays them quite open to public view; and the veil being as it were ſuddenly removed, all the affections and emotions of the ſoul, its ſudden impulſes, its haſty ſallies and irregularities, are conſpicuouſly diſplayed.

Should the curious inquirer be deſirous of more perfect information upon this ſubject, he may ſatisfy himſelf, I apprehend, with no great labour or difficulty. Let him take the book of Job; let him read the hiſtorical proem of that book; let him proceed to the metrical parts, and let him diligently attend to the firſt ſpeech of Job. He will, I dare believe, confeſs, that, when arrived at the metrical part, he feels as if he were reading another language; and is ſurprized at a diſſimilarity in the ſtyle of the two paſſages much greater than between that of Livy and Virgil, or even Herodotus and Homer. Nor indeed could the fact be otherwiſe according to the nature of things; ſince in the latter paſſage the moſt exquiſite pathos is diſplayed, ſuch indeed as has not been exceeded, and ſcarcely

ſcarcely equalled by any effort of the Muſes. Not only the force, the beauty, the ſublimity of the ſentiments are unrivalled; but ſuch is the character of the diction in general, ſo vivid is the expreſſion, ſo intereſting the aſſemblage of objects, ſo cloſe and connected the ſentences, ſo animated and paſſionate the whole arrangement, that the Hebrew literature itſelf contains nothing more poetical. The greater part of theſe beauties are ſo obvious, that they cannot poſſibly eſcape the eye of a diligent reader; there are ſome, however, which, depending chiefly upon the arrangement and conſtruction, are of a more abſtruſe nature. It alſo ſometimes happens, that thoſe beauties which may be eaſily conceived, are very difficult to be explained: while we ſimply contemplate them, they appear ſufficiently manifeſt; if we approach nearer, and attempt to touch and handle them, they vaniſh and eſcape. Since, however, it would not be conſiſtent with my duty on the preſent occaſion to paſs them by totally unregarded, I ſhall rely, Gentlemen, upon your accuſtomed candour, while I attempt to render, if poſſible, ſome of theſe elegancies more obvious and familiar.

The

The firſt thing that arreſts the attention of the reader in this paſſage, is the violent ſorrow of Job, which burſts forth on a ſudden, and flows from his heart, where it had long been confined and ſuppreſſed:

" Let the day periſh, I was born in it; (i. e. in
" which I was born)
" And the night (which) ſaid a man is con-
" ceived [5]."

Obſerve here the conciſe and abrupt form of the firſt verſe; and in the ſecond the boldneſs of the figure, and the ſtill more abrupt concluſion. Let the reader then conſider, whether he could endure ſuch a ſpirited, vehement, and perplexed form of expreſſion in any proſe compoſition; or even in verſe, unleſs it were expreſſive of the deepeſt pathos [6].

He

[5] Jon iii. 3. The learned Biſhop follows here the interpretation of Schultens, which Mr. Heath has given a good reaſon for declining to adopt. He renders the paſſage thus:

May the day periſh wherein I was brought forth,
And the night which ſaid, See a man child is born!

S. H.

[6] Our Author exaggerates a little the boldneſs and energy of this paſſage, conceiving that to be an unuſual phraſeology,

He will nevertheleſs, I doubt not, acknowledge that the meaning of this ſentence is extremely clear, ſo clear indeed, that if any perſon ſhould attempt to make it more copious and explanatory, he would render it leſs expreſſive of the mind and feelings of the ſpeaker. It happens fortunately that we have an opportunity of making the experiment upon this very ſentiment. There is a paſſage of Jeremiah ſo exactly ſimilar, that it might almoſt be imagined a direct imitation: the meaning is the ſame, nor is there any very great difference in the phraſeology; but Jeremiah fills up the ellipſes, ſmooths and harmonizes the rough and uncouth language of Job, and dilates a ſhort diſtich into two

phraſeology, which is only uncommon to us. There will be an opportunity of mentioning the *change* or *enallege* of the tenſes in the next Lecture. The ellipſis of the relative pronoun *aſher* (which) is not at all harſh and unuſual; nothing is more common in the Arabic, it being accounted among the elegancies of language, nor is it unuſual with the Hebrews. Even with the Engliſh, the pronoun *which* is very frequently omitted. M.

"There are in all languages certain elliptical expreſ-
"ſions, which uſe has eſtabliſhed, and which therefore
"very rarely occaſion darkneſs."

CAMPE. *Phil. of Rhet.*

equal

equal diſtichs, conſiſting of ſomewhat longer verſes, which is the meaſure he commonly makes uſe of;

"Curſed be the day on which I was born,
"The day on which my mother bare me, let it
" not be bleſſed.
"Curſed be the man who brought the news to
" my father,
"Saying, there is a male child born unto thee;
"Making him exceedingly glad [7]."

Thus it happens, that the imprecation of Jeremiah has more in it of complaint than of indignation; it is milder, ſofter, and more plaintive, peculiarly calculated to excite pity, in moving which the great excellence of this prophet conſiſts: while that of Job is more adapted to ſtrike us with terror than to excite our compaſſion [8].

But to proceed. I ſhall not trouble you with a tedious diſcuſſion of thoſe particulars which are ſufficiently apparent; the crouded

[7] JER. xx. 14, 15.

[8] This is an excellent obſervation. The grief, or rather deſpair, of Job, is of the ſolemn, majeſtic, and truly tragic kind; that of Jeremiah has more of the elegiac tenderneſs, which raiſes no greater paſſion than pity, and is only calculated to excite our tears. M.

and

and abrupt ſentences, which ſeem to have little connexion, burſting from the glowing boſom with matchleſs force and impetuoſity; the bold and magnificent expreſſions, which the eloquence of indignation pours forth, four inſtances of which occur in the ſpace of twice as many verſes [9], and which ſeem to be altogether poetical: two of them indeed are found continually in the poets, and in them only; the others are ſtill more uncommon. Omitting theſe, therefore, the object which at preſent ſeems more worthy of examination, is, that redundancy of expreſſion, which in a few lines takes place of the former exceſſive conciſeneſs:

"That night—let darkneſs ſeize upon it [10]."

In this alſo there is the ſtrongeſt indication of paſſion, and a perturbid mind. He doubtleſs intended at firſt to expreſs himſelf in this manner:

"Be that night darkneſs [11]"——

But in the very act of uttering it, he ſuddenly catches at an expreſſion, which appears more

[9] Ver. 4, 5, 7. תופת, צלמות, כמריריי, בלמוד

[10] Ver. 6. [11] See ver. 4.

animated

animated and energetic. I do not know that I can better illuſtrate this obſervation than by referring to a paſſage in Horace, in which a ſimilar tranſition and redundancy falls from the indignant poet:

" He who—(bane of the fruitful earth!
" Curſt was the hour that gave thee birth!)
" He—O vile pernicious tree!
" Was ſurely curſt who planted thee,
" Well may I think the parricide
" In blood his guilty ſoul had dy'd,
" Or plung'd his dagger in the breaſt,
" At midnight, of his ſleeping gueſt,
" Or temper'd every baleful juice,
" Which pois'nous Cholchian glebes produce,
" Or if a blacker crime be known,
" That crime the wretch had made his own."[12]

For undoubtedly the poet begun, as if he intended to purſue the ſubject in a regular order, and to finiſh the ſentence in this form. " He who—planted thee; he was acceſſory " to the murder of his parents, and ſprinkled " his chambers with the blood of his gueſt; " he dealt in the poiſon of Cholchis," &c. But anger and vexation diſſipated the order

[12] FRANCIS, B. ii. Ode xiii. with ſome little alteration.

of

of his ideas, and deſtroyed the conſtruction of this ſentence. But ſhould ſome officious Grammarian take in hand the paſſage, (for this is a very diligent race of beings, and ſometimes more than ſufficiently exact and ſcrupulous) and attempt to reſtore it to its primitive purity and perfection, the whole grace and excellence of that beautiful exordium would be immediately annihilated, all the impetuoſity and ardour would in a moment be extinguiſhed. — But to return to Job:

" Lo! that night, may it be fruitleſs [13]!"

He appears to have a direct picture or image of that night before his eyes, and to point it out with his finger. " The doors of my " womb" for " the doors of my mother's " womb [14]" is an elliptical form of expreſſion, the meaning of which is eaſily cleared up, but which no perſon in a tranquil ſtate of mind, and quite maſter of himſelf, would venture to employ. Not to detain you too long upon this ſubject, I ſhall produce only one paſſage more, which is about the concluſion of this animated ſpeech:

[13] Ch. iii. ver. 7. [14] Ver. 10.

" Wherefore ſhould he give light to the miſerable?
" And life to thoſe who are in bitterneſs of ſoul?
" Who call aloud for death, but it cometh not;
" Who dig for it more than for hidden treaſures.
" Who would rejoice even to exultation,
" And be in raptures, if they had found the grave.
" Well might it befit the man whoſe way is
" ſheltered,
" And whom God hath ſurrounded with an hedge.
" But my groaning cometh like my daily food,
" And my roarings are poured out like water [15]."

The whole compoſition of this paſſage is admirable, and deſerves a minute attention. " Wherefore ſhould he give light to the mi-" ſerable?"—But who is the giver alluded to? Certainly God himſelf, whom Job has indeed in his mind; but it eſcaped his notice that no mention is made of him in the preceding lines. He ſeems to ſpeak of the miſerable in general, but by a violent and ſudden tranſition he applies the whole to himſelf, " But my groaning cometh like my " daily food." It is plain, therefore, that in all the preceding reflexions he has himſelf only in view. He makes a tranſition from the ſingular to the plural, and back again, a

[15] Ver. 20—24.

remarkable

remarkable amplification intervening, ex-expreſſive of his deſire of death, the force and boldneſs of which is incomparable; at laſt, as if ſuddenly recollecting himſelf, he returns to the former ſubject, which he had apparently quitted, and reſumes the detail of his own miſery. From theſe obſervations I think it will be manifeſt, that the agitated and diſordered ſtate of the ſpeaker's mind is not more evidently demonſtrated by a happy boldneſs of ſentiment and imagery, and an uncommon force of language, than by the very form, conduct, and arrangement of the whole.

The peculiar property which I have laboured to demonſtrate in this paſſage, will, I apprehend, be found to prevail as a characteriſtic of the Hebrew poetry, making due allowance for different ſubjects and circumſtances; I mean that vivid and ardent ſtyle, which is ſo well calculated to diſplay the emotions and paſſions of the mind. Hence the poetry of the Hebrews abounds with phraſes and idioms totally unſuited to proſe compoſition, and which frequently appear to us harſh and unuſual, I had almoſt ſaid unnatural and barbarous; which, however, are

deſtitute neither of meaning, nor of force, were we but ſufficiently informed to judge of their true application. It will, however, be worth our while, perhaps, to make the experiment on ſome other paſſages of this nature, and to try at leaſt what can be done towards the further elucidation of this point.

LECTURE XV.

OF SUBLIMITY OF EXPRESSION.

The character of the Poetic Dialect further illuſtrated by examples of different kinds from the Song of Moſes, DEUT. xxxii.—*The frequent and ſudden tranſition from one perſon to another; its cauſe and effects—The uſe of the Tenſes in a manner quite different from common language: the reaſons of this—The Hebrew language peculiar in this reſpect—The future is often ſpoken of in the perfect preſent, and the paſt in the future Tenſe: the reaſon of the former eaſy to be explained; the latter is a matter of conſiderable difficulty, which neither the Commentators, the Tranſlators, nor even the Grammarians have elucidated—Some examples of this, and the explanation of them—The frequent uſe of this form of conſtruction may be conſidered as characteriſtical of the Poetic Dialect.*

IN order to demonſtrate more completely the ſublimity of the Hebrew poetry by a compariſon with proſe, I referred the ſtudent of Hebrew to the Book of Job, convinced that he would eaſily perceive, both in the matter and diction a very conſiderable difference between the hiſtorical introduction of that book, and the metrical paſſages immediately ſucceeding. But leſt theſe paſſages ſhould be objected to, as improper inſtances

for ſuch a compariſon, on the ſuppoſition that, although both of them were written entirely either in verſe or proſe, yet the different nature of the ſubjects would require a very different ſtyle; we ſhall now make the experiment on ſome other paſſages, and compare the manner of treating the ſame ſubject in verſe and proſe. The Book of Deuteronomy will afford us a convenient inſtance; for Moſes appears there in the character both of an orator and a poet. In the former character, he addreſſes a very ſolemn and intereſting oration to the people of Iſrael [1], exhorting them, by the moſt inviting promiſes, to the obſervance of the covenant, and diſſuading them from the violation of it by threats of the moſt exemplary puniſhment: and for the purpoſe of impreſſing the ſame more forcibly on their minds, he afterwards, by the command of God, embelliſhes the ſubject with all the elegance of verſe [2], in a poem, which bears every mark of divine inſpiration. In theſe two paſſages is diſplayed every excellence of which the Hebrew lan-

[1] Deut. Chap. xxviii, xxix, xxx, xxxi.

[2] Deut. xxxii.

guage is capable in both ſpecies of compoſition; all that is grand, forcible, and majeſtic, both in proſe and verſe: From them too we may be enabled eaſily to comprehend the difference between the ſtyle of oratory among the Hebrews, and that of their poetry, not only in ſentiment, but in the imagery, the arrangement, and the language. Whoever wiſhes, therefore, to ſatisfy himſelf concerning the true character and genius of the Hebrew poetry, I would adviſe carefully to compare the two paſſages, and I think he will ſoon diſcover that the former, though great, ſpirited, and abounding with ornament, is notwithſtanding regular, copious, and diffuſe; that, with all its vehemence and impetuoſity, it ſtill preſerves a ſmoothneſs, evenneſs, and uniformity throughout; and that the latter, on the contrary, conſiſts of ſentences, pointed, energetic, conciſe, and ſplendid; that the ſentiments are truly elevated and ſublime, the language bright and animated, the expreſſion and phraſeology uncommon; while the mind of the poet never continues fixed to any ſingle point, but glances continually from one object to another.

ther. Theſe remarks are of ſuch a nature, that the diligent reader will apprehend them better by experience and his own obſervation, than by means of any commentary or explanation whatever. There are, however, one or two points which have attracted my notice in the peruſal of this remarkable poem; and as they are of general uſe and application, and may ſerve to elucidate many of the difficult paſſages of the Hebrew poetry, they appear to me not undeſerving of a more particular examination.

Taking, therefore, this poem as an example, the firſt general obſervation, to which I would direct your attention, is the ſudden and frequent change of the perſons, and principally in the addreſſes or expoſtulations; for enough has been ſaid already concerning the introduction of different characters or perſonifications. In the exordium of this poem, Moſes diſplays the truth and juſtice of Almighty God, moſt ſacredly regarded in all his acts and counſels: whence he takes occaſion to reprove the perfidy and wickedneſs of his ungrateful people; at firſt as if his cenſure were only pointed at the abſent,

" Their

" Their evil diſpoſition hath corrupted his chil-
" dren, which are indeed no longer his[3]:"

He then ſuddenly directs his diſcourſe to themſelves;

" Perverſe and crooked generation!
" Will ye thus requite JEHOVAH,
" Fooliſh people and unwiſe?
" Is he not thy father and thy redeemer;
" Did he not make thee and form thee?"

After his indignation has ſomewhat ſubſided, adverting to a remoter period, he beautifully enlarges upon the indulgence, and more than paternal affection, continually manifeſted by Almighty God towards the Iſraelites, from the time when he firſt choſe them for his peculiar people; and all this again without ſeeming directly to apply it to them. He afterwards admirably exaggerates the ſtupidity and barbarity of this ungrate-

[3] Ver. 5, 6. I have endeavoured, as far as I was able, to render perſpicuous the Hebrew reading; but after all, that which is adopted by the LXX. the SAM. and SYR. is perhaps nearer the truth שחתו לא לו בני מומם; " They are corrupted, they are not his, (they are) ſons " of error, or blemiſh." Which is alſo partly confirmed by AQUILA, VULG. SYMMACHUS. *Author's Note.*

ful people, which exceeds that of the brutes themſelves. Obſerve with what force the indignation of the Prophet again breaks forth:

" But Jeſhurun grew fat and reſiſted;
" Thou greweſt fat, thou waſt made thick, thou
" waſt covered with fat!
" And he deſerted the God that made him,
" And deſpiſed the rock of his ſalvation."

The abrupt tranſition in one ſhort ſentence to the Iſraelites, and back again, is wonderfully forcible and pointed, and excellently expreſſive of diſguſt and indignation. There is a paſſage of Virgil, which, though it be leſs animated, is certainly not unworthy of being compared with this of Moſes; it is that in which, by an ingenious apoſtrophe, he upbraids the traitor with his crime, and at the ſame time exonerates the king from the imputation of cruelty:

By Godlike Tullus doom'd the traitor dies,
(And thou, falſe Metius, doſt too late repent
Thy violated faith!) by furious ſteeds
In pieces torn, his entrails ſtrew the ground,
And the low brambles drink his ſtreaming blood*.

* *Æn.* viii. 642.

I might

I might proceed, and produce ſeveral examples in point from the ſame poem, and innumerable from other parts of the ſacred writings, different from each other both in expreſſion and form. Theſe, however, are ſufficient to demonſtrate the force of this kind of compoſition in expreſſing the more vehement affections, and in marking thoſe ſudden emotions, which diſtract the mind and divide its attention. But whoever will attend with any diligence to the poetry of the Hebrews, will find that examples of this kind almoſt perpetually occur, and much more frequently, than could be endured in the poetry of the Greeks and Romans, or even in our own: he will find many of theſe inſtances not eaſy to be underſtood; the force and deſign of ſome of them, when ſeparately conſidered, are indeed ſcarcely to be explained, or even perfectly comprehended. The reader will not, however, be warranted in concluding from this conceſſion, that thoſe very paſſages which are moſt obſcure are in themſelves abſurd, and that they poſſeſs no general force or effect in diſtinguiſhing the diction, in ſuſtaining the poetic ſpirit, and in forming that peculiar character, which, however

however it may differ from what we are accuſtomed to, is in its kind altogether deſerving of applauſe. In this caſe we ought to conſider the proper genius and character of the Hebrew poetry. It is unconſtrained, animated, bold, and fervid. The Orientals look upon the language of poetry as wholly diſtinct from that of common life, as calculated immediately for expreſſing the paſſions: if, therefore, it were to be reduced to the plain rule and order of reaſon, if every word and ſentence were to be arranged with care and ſtudy, as if calculated for perſpicuity alone, it would be no longer what they intended it, and to call it the language of paſſion would be the groſſeſt of ſoleciſms.

The other obſervation, to which I alluded as relating both to this poem and to the poetry of the Hebrews in general, is, that you there find a much more frequent change or variation of the tenſes than occurs in common language. The chief aim of ſuch a tranſition, is, to render the ſubject of a narration or deſcription more ſtriking, and even to embody and give it a viſible exiſtence [5]. Thus,

[5] The change of tenſes here remarked on, is no more a peculiarity of the Hebrew poetry than of our own. Perhaps

Thus, in all languages, in proſe as well as poetry, it is uſual to ſpeak of paſt as well as future events in the preſent tenſe, by which means whatever is deſcribed or expreſſed is in a manner brought immediately before our eyes; nor does the mind contemplate a diſtant object, by looking back to the paſt or forward to the future. But in this reſpect there is a great peculiarity in the Hebrew language. For the Hebrew verbs have no form for expreſſing the imperfect or indefinite of the preſent tenſe, or an action which

haps there does not exiſt a finer inſtance of a *paſt* event rendered *preſent*, by this means, than in the following deſcription by Dryden:

He ſung Darius great and good,
By too ſevere a fate,
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high eſtate,
And welt'ring in his blood:
Deſerted at his utmoſt need,
By thoſe his former bounty fed:
On the bare earth expos'd he LIES,
With not a friend to cloſe his eyes.

Nor is there a leſs happy example of *future* events made *preſent*, in the BARD of Gray:

Viſions of glory, ſpare my aching ſight,
Ye *unborn* Ages, *croud* not on my ſoul! &c. &c.

S. H.

now

now is performing: this is uſually effected by a participle only, or by a verb ſubſtantive underſtood, neither of which are often made uſe of in ſuch paſſages as theſe, nor indeed can be always conveniently admitted. They, therefore, take another method of attaining this end, and for the ſake of clearneſs and preciſion, expreſs future events by the paſt tenſe, or rather by the perfect preſent, as if they had actually taken place; and, on the contrary, paſt events by the future, as if immediately or ſpeedily to happen, and only proceeding towards their completion. Of the firſt of theſe forms of conſtruction, namely, the expreſſing of the future by the paſt tenſe, an inſtance which we juſt now quoted will demonſtrate both the nature and the effect.

Moſes foreſeeing, by the impulſe of divine inſpiration, the miſerable neglect of the true worſhip, into which the people of Iſrael were univerſally to relapſe, reprobates in the following terms the vices of that ungrateful people, as if they had been already committed in his immediate preſence:

"Their evil diſpoſition hath corrupted his chil-
"dren, which are indeed no longer his."

Thus

Thus he ſpeaks as if he were the actual witneſs of their depravity, and preſent at thoſe impious rites, with which they were about to violate a religion divinely inſtituted through his means. Nothing can be more efficacious than this kind of anticipation to the clear, evident, and almoſt ocular demonſtration of things. On this account it is a very common mode of expreſſion in the prophetical writings; and in this, as in every other excellence, Iſaiah particularly challenges our higheſt admiration. Obſerve only with what exactneſs and perſpicuity he has delineated the journey of Sennacherib towards Jeruſalem, and the different ſtages of the army; inſomuch that the light and evidence which the Prophet throws upon the circumſtances of the prediction, falls nothing ſhort of the clearneſs and accuracy of an hiſtorical narration:

" He is come to Aiath; he hath paſſed to
" Migron;
" At Michmas he will depoſit his baggage.
" They have paſſed the ſtrait; Geba is their
" lodging for the night:
" Ramah is frightned; Gibeah of Saul fleeth.

" Cry

" Cry aloud with thy voice, O daughter of
" Gallim;
" Hearken unto her, O Laiſh; anſwer her, O
" Anathoth.
" Madmena is gone away; the inhabitants of
" Gebim flee amain.
" Yet this day ſhall he abide in Nob;
" He ſhall ſhake his hand againſt the mount of
" the daughter of Sion [6]."

Thus

[6] ISAI. x. 28—32. In the 29th verſe I think with the CHALDEE Paraphraſt, that for לגו we ſhould read לגה. How others, or the greater part, may have read it, is not ſufficiently apparent; but to me it appears of conſiderable importance, as well to the ſenſe as the elegance of the paſſage. *Gnaniah Gnanathoth* in ver. 30. here the epithet alludes to the meaning or etymology of the name, as if he had ſaid ——

" Alas! thy name is too well founded in truth."

I would remark here, that if the reader deſires to underſtand, how much the Prophets, and particularly Iſaiah, are attached to beauties of this kind, he may be ſatisfied on conſulting the following paſſages: ISAI. v. 7. xiii. 6. xxiv. 17. xxvii. 7. xxxiii. 1. lvii. 6. lxi. 3. lxv. 11, 12. JER. xlviii. 2. EZEK. vii. 6. HOS. ix. 15. AMOS v. 5. MIC. i. 10—15. ZEPH. ii. 4. See alſo GEN. ix. 27. xlix. 8—16, 19. Perhaps the SYR. may be right in this paſſage, *Hear, O Laiſha; and anſwer, O Anathoth!* It reads *Ve-gnani.* " In the word *Laiſha*, the ה is wanting

" in

Thus the plague of locuſts is denounced, and deſcribed, as if it had already happened, by the Prophet Joel:

" For a nation hath gone up on my land,
" Who are ſtrong and without number:
" They have deſtroyed my vine, and have made
" my fig-tree a broken branch.
" They have made it quite bare, and caſt it away:
" the branches thereof are made white.
" The field is laid waſte; the ground, the ground
" mourneth [7]."

The Prophet is undoubtedly here ſpeaking of a future event; for, the very devaſtation, which, to ſtrike the more forcibly on the mind, he has thus depicted as an event already paſt, is threatened by him in the ſequel under another image to be immediately inflicted [8], unleſs the people repent of their wickedneſs. Thus far the Hebrew language differs not materially from others; thoſe future actions or events which other writers, for the

" in one Manuſcript. In ver. 32. many Manuſcripts, and
" ſome Editions, read נא: which is one example among
" many, in which the Text of many Manuſcripts, and of
" the oldeſt Editions, agrees with the Keri." K.
Author's Note.

[7] Joel i. 6, 7, 10, &c. [8] Joel ii.

ſake

ſake of force and clearneſs, expreſs in the imperfect preſent, the Hebrews expreſs in the perfect preſent with equal effect.

In another point, it muſt be confeſſed, they differ eſſentially from other writers, namely, when they intimate paſt events in the form of the future tenſe: and I muſt add, that this is a matter of conſiderable difficulty. If we reſort to the Tranſlators and Commentators, ſo far are they from affording any ſolution, that they do not ſo much as notice it, accommodating as much as poſſible the form of the tenſes to the ſubject and context, and explaining it rather according to their own opinions, than according to the rules of Grammar, or any fixed and eſtabliſhed principles. If again we apply to the Grammarians, we ſhall ſtill find ourſelves no leſs at a loſs: they, indeed, remark the circumſtance, but they neither explain the reaſon of it, nor yet are candid enough to make a fair confeſſion of their own ignorance. They endeavour to confuſe their diſciples by the uſe of a Greek term, and have always at hand a ſort of inexplicable and myſterious *enallege* or *change* of the tenſes, with which rather than ſay nothing, they attempt to evade a cloſer inquiry;

inquiry; as if the change were made by accident, and from no principle or motive: than which nothing can be conceived more abſurd or impertinent[9]. That theſe apparent

[9] I have no inclination to contradict our Author in this aſſertion. The Grammarians have not been content with defending this phraſeology as an enallege, but have diſtinguiſhed it by the name of the *prophetic* preterite. They might as well have called it the *prophetic preſent*, ſince, as the Hebrew language wants the *preſent tenſe*, the paſt is always ſubſtituted in its room. But however they may chuſe to diſtinguiſh it, whether as a prophetic preſent or a prophetic preterite, it is by no means unuſual in the more modern languages. Thus in Engliſh the author of a Poem called Manners:

"Rapt into thought, lo! I Britannia ſee
"Riſing ſuperior o'er the ſubject ſea:
"And her gay pendants ſpread their ſilken wings
"Big with the fate of Empires and of Kings."

Thus the Sybil in Virgil:

——— "in regna Lavini
"Dardanidæ veniens." M.

If the learned Profeſſor had been very converſant in our poetry, he might have found many more ſtriking examples than that which he has quoted, and particularly in the poems of Mr. Gray. Indeed this is by no means a favourable ſpecimen of Engliſh poetry.—*See* and *ſea* is no rhyme, being exactly the ſame ſound.—"The gay pen-
"dants, and ſilken wings *big* with the fate of Empires,"

rent anomalies, however, are not without their peculiar force and beauty, I have not a doubt; that many of them ſhould cauſe difficulty and obſcurity, conſidering the great antiquity of the Hebrew language, is not to be wondered at. Some light may notwithſtanding be reflected upon the ſubject, by a careful attention to the ſtate of the writer's mind, and by conſidering properly what ideas were likely to be prevalent in his imagination at the time of his writing. There is a remarkable inſtance of this form of conſtruction in that very ſong of Moſes, to which we have juſt been alluding. After mentioning the divine diſpenſation, by which the Iſraelites were diſtinguiſhed as the choſen people of God, he proceeds to ſtate with what love and tenderneſs the Almighty had cheriſhed them, from the time in which he brought them from Egypt, led them by the hand through

&c. is a falſe metaphor: if we even overlook the plagiariſm—"*Big with the fate* of Cato and of Rome."

For the information of modern writers, who may chuſe to make uſe of this bold figure, I will add a remark, that it is never to be introduced, but when the mind is ſufficiently warm not to perceive the illuſion. The ſcene muſt be ſo intereſting that the reader cannot help realizing it. T.

the

the wilderneſs, and, as it were, carried them in his boſom: all theſe, though paſt events, are expreſſed in the future tenſe:

" He will find him in a deſert land,
" In the vaſt and howling wilderneſs:
" He will lead him about, he will inſtruct him;
" He will keep him as the pupil of his eye [10]."

You will readily judge whether this paſſage can admit of any other explication, than that of Moſes' ſuppoſing himſelf preſent at the time when the Almighty ſelected the people of Iſrael for himſelf; and thence, as from an eminence, contemplating the conſequences of that diſpenſation. The caſe will be found ſimilar in many other paſſages; as, in particular, more than once in that hiſtorical Pſalm, which is inſcribed with the name of Aſaph. After the Prophet has expoſed the

[10] DEUT. xxxii. 10. " In the SAMAR. copy we read " as follows:

יאמצהו בארץ המדבר
ובתהללות ישמנהו:

" That is, *He will comfort him in the Land of the Deſert,* " *and in rejoicings he will plentifully ſuſtain him:* this read- " ing is mentioned only that it may be compared and " examined with the Hebrew." H. See HOUBIGANT in loc. *Author's Note.*

perfidy of the people, their refractory conduct almoſt in the very criſis of their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage, he in a manner anticipates in his mind the clemency of God, and the repeated tranſgreſſions of the Iſraelites, and ſpeaks of them as future events:

" But he, moved with compaſſion, will pardon
" their iniquity, and will not deſtroy them;
" And frequently will turn away his wrath,
" Nor will ſtir up all his indignation.——
" How often will they rebel againſt him in the
" deſert,
" And will grieve him in the wilderneſs [11]!"

The general diſpoſition and arrangement of the hundred and fourth Pſalm affords a moſt elegant exemplification of this conſtruction. For the Prophet, inſtancing the greatneſs and wiſdom of God in the conſtitution and preſervation of the natural world, ſpeaks of the actions and decrees of the Almighty in the preſent tenſe, as if he himſelf had been a witneſs when they were brought to light; and diſplays their conſequences and uſes, and what are called the final cauſes, in the

[11] PSAL. lxxviii. 38, 40.

future

future tenſe, as if looking forward from the beginning through all future time.

But although theſe and ſome other paſſages will admit of this explanation, there are many to which it will not apply. In theſe the ſituation and ſtate of the authors are not ſo much to be conſidered, as the peculiar nature or idiom of the language. For the Hebrews frequently make uſe of the future tenſe in ſuch a manner, that it appears not to have relation to the preſent ſpeaker, but to the perſon or thing which was laſt ſpoken of. Thus when any action is connected with another action, or conſequent to it; or when the ſame action is repeated or continued, when a perſon perſeveres in the ſame action, or performs it with great earneſtneſs or aſſiduity, this is all expreſſed as if it were future [12]. This form is therefore diſtinguiſhed by the Grammarians by the appellation *Gnatid*, which is equivalent to prompt, expedite, or impending. Examples enough to this purpoſe might be produced from the paſſages which have been referred to on former occaſions: for inſtance, from that moſt elegant proſopopœia of the Mother

[12] See 2 SAM. xii. 3.

of Siſera [13]; from the allegory of the Vine, which was brought out of Egypt [14]; from the compariſon founded on the maternal piety and ſolicitude of the Eagle [15]: the form and manner of all which may be eaſily perceived by an attentive reader, but cannot be well explained by the moſt induſtrious commentator [16].

Now,

[13] JUDG. v. 29. [14] PSAL. lxxx. 9, 12, 14.

[15] DEUT. xxxii. 11.

[16] I ſo widely differ from our Author, that I have very little doubt of making this matter, as far as is neceſſary to underſtand his meaning, perfectly intelligible to the Engliſh reader, by merely exhibiting the paſſages in queſtion, and comparing the literal with our common tranſlation. In JUD. v. 29. our verſion reads, "Her wiſe ladies an-"ſwer her; yea, ſhe returned anſwer to herſelf." In the original it is, "Her wiſe ladies *will* anſwer her; yea, "ſhe *will* return anſwer to herſelf." In PSAL. lxxx. 8. our tranſlation is, "Thou broughteſt a vine," &c. In the original, "Thou *wilt* bring a vine," &c. "thou *wilt* "caſt out," &c. In DEUT. xxxii. 11. our Bible reads, "As an eagle ſtirreth up her neſt, fluttereth over her "young, ſpreadeth her wings," &c. In the original it is, "As the eagle *will* ſtir up, *will* flutter, *will* ſpread her "wings," &c. It is not uncommon in vulgar language even in this country, and particularly the northern parts of it, when an action is deſcribed in the general, as in the above alluſion of the Eagle, to uſe the future tenſe; and if that very paſſage had been literally tranſlated, the compariſon

Now, if, as I have ſtated, this unuſual form of conſtruction be the effect either of ſome ſudden emotion in the ſpeaker, of ſome new and extraordinary ſtate of mind; or if, on any other account, from the relation of the ſubject, or the genius of the language, it be poſſeſſed of ſome peculiar force or energy; it will obviouſly follow, that it muſt more frequently occur in poetry than in proſe, ſince it is particularly adapted to the nature, the verſatility, and variety of the former, and to the expreſſion of any violent paſſion; and ſince it has but little affinity to that mildneſs and temperance of language, which proceeds in one uniform and even tenour. Thus if we attend diligently to the poetry of the Hebrews, and carefully remark its peculiar characteriſtics, we ſhall hardly

compariſon would have been equally intelligible to our common people. But, I muſt confeſs, there is after all a moſt licentious uſe of the different tenſes prevalent in the Hebrew language, which to us, who are unacquainted with the principles of it, creates ſtrange confuſion, and obliges us commonly to have recourſe to the context, and the apparent deſign of the paſſage. Nor do all theſe very ingenious hypotheſes of our Author entirely remove the difficulty; or explain the principles of this form of conſtruction to my ſatisfaction. T.

find any circumſtance, the regular and artificial conformation of the ſentences excepted, which more evidently diſtinguiſhes it from the ſtyle of proſe compoſition, than the ſingularity which is now under conſideration. For though it be allowed, that this idiom is not ſo entirely inconſiſtent with proſe, but that a few examples of it might be produced [17], on the whole I am convinced, that the free and frequent uſe of it may be accounted as the certain characteriſtic of poetry.

That the full force of theſe and other peculiarities, which ſerve to diſtinguiſh the poetical diction of the Hebrews, and to preſerve that ſublimity and ſplendour for which it is ſo remarkable, ſhould be fully apparent from a few examples, is hardly to be expected; nor did I flatter myſelf with any ſuch expectation, when I entered upon this part of my ſubject. My intention was only to produce an inſtance or two, which were moſt likely to occur to thoſe who enter upon this

[17] Hitherto I have only met with the following: JUD. ii. 1. (ſee however HOUBIGANT in loc.) and xxi. 25. 1 SAM. xxvii. 9, 11. 2 SAM. xii. 31. 1 KINGS xxi. 6. 1 CHRON. xi. 8. See alſo PETERS on JOB, p. 202. *Author's Note.*

courſe

courſe of reading, and which appeared to demand particular attention. The perfect character and genius, the whole form, principles, and nature of the poetical diction and ornaments, can neither be comprehended in any minute or artificial precepts whatever, nor perhaps be reduced altogether to rule and method: the complete knowledge and perception of theſe are only to be attained by reading and inveſtigation, united with acuteneſs of judgment and delicacy of taſte.

LECTURE XVI.

OF SUBLIMITY OF SENTIMENT.

Sublimity of ſentiment ariſes, either from elevation of mind, or from ſome vehement paſſion; in each, it is either natural, or the effect of divine inſpiration — Elevation of mind is diſplayed in the greatneſs of the ſubject, the adjuncts, and the imagery — Examples from the deſcriptions of the Divine Majeſty; of the works and attributes of the Deity; alſo from the diſplay of the Divine Power in the form of Interrogation and Irony — The Hebrew poets attribute the human paſſions to the Deity without departing from ſublimity; and that frequently when the imagery appears leaſt conſiſtent with the Divine Majeſty: the reaſon of this.

IF we conſider the very intimate connexion, which on all occaſions ſubſiſts between ſentiment and language, it will perhaps appear, that the peculiar quality, of which we have juſt been treating, under the title of Sublimity of Expreſſion, might ultimately be referred to that of Sentiment. In the ſtricteſt ſenſe, however, Sublimity of Sentiment may be accounted a diſtinct quality, and may be ſaid to proceed, either from a certain elevation of mind, and a happy boldneſs of conception;

ception; or from a ſtrong impulſe of the ſoul, when agitated by the more violent affections. The one is called by Longinus *Grandeur of Conception*, the other *Vehemence* or *Enthuſiaſm of Paſſion*. To each of theſe we muſt have recourſe in the preſent diſquiſition, and in applying them to the ſacred Poets, I ſhall endeavour to detract nothing from the dignity of that inſpiration, which proceeds from higher cauſes, while I allow to the genius of each writer his own peculiar excellence and accompliſhments. I am indeed of opinion, that the Divine Spirit by no means takes ſuch an entire poſſeſſion of the mind of the Prophet, as to ſubdue or extinguiſh the character and genius of the man: the natural powers of the mind are in general elevated and refined, they are neither eradicated nor totally obſcured; and though the writings of Moſes, of David, and of Iſaiah, always bear the marks of a divine and celeſtial impulſe, we may nevertheleſs plainly diſcover in them the particular characters of their reſpective authors.

That ſpecies of the Sublime, which proceeds from a boldneſs of ſpirit, and an elevation of the ſoul, whether inherent in the

author, or derived from a divine impulſe and inſpiration, is diſplayed firſt in the greatneſs and ſublimity of the ſubject itſelf; ſecondly, in the choice of the adjuncts or circumſtances (by the importance and magnitude of which a degree of force and elevation is added to the deſcription); and laſtly, in the ſplendour and magnificence of the imagery, by which the whole is illuſtrated. In all theſe the Hebrew writers have obtained an unrivalled pre-eminence. As far as reſpects the dignity and importance of the ſubject, they not only ſurpaſs all other writers, but even exceed the confines of human genius and intellect. The greatneſs, the power, the juſtice, the immenſity of God; the infinite wiſdom of his works and of his diſpenſations, are the ſubjects in which the Hebrew Poetry is always converſant, and always excels. If we only conſider with a common degree of candour how greatly inferior the poetry of all other nations appears, whenever it preſumes to treat of theſe ſubjects; and how unequal to the dignity of the matter the higheſt conceptions of the human genius are found to be; we ſhall, I think, not only acknowledge the ſublimity, but the divinity of

that

that of the Hebrews. Nor does this greatneſs and elevation conſiſt altogether in the ſubjects and ſentiments, which however expreſſed, would yet retain ſome part at leaſt of their native force and dignity, but the manner in which theſe lofty ideas are arranged, and the embelliſhments of deſcription with which they abound, claim our warmeſt admiration: and this, whether we regard the adjuncts or circumſtances, which are ſelected with ſo much judgment as uniformly to contribute to the ſublimity of the principal ſubject; or the amplitude of that imagery, which repreſents objects the moſt remote from human apprehenſion in ſuch enchanting colours, that, although debaſed by human painting, they ſtill retain their genuine ſanctity and excellence. Since, therefore, the ſublimity of the ſacred Poets has been already exemplified in a variety of inſtances, it will probably be ſufficient, in addition to theſe, to produce a few examples as illuſtrations of theſe remarks, chiefly taken from thoſe parts of Scripture, in which a delineation of the Divine Majeſty is attempted.

In the firſt place then let me recal to your remembrance the ſolemnity and magnificence with

with which the power of God in the creation of the univerſe is depicted. And here, I cannot poſſibly overlook that paſſage of the ſacred hiſtorian, which has been ſo frequently commended, in which the importance of the circumſtance and the greatneſs of the idea (the human mind cannot indeed well conceive a greater) is no leſs remarkable than the expreſſive brevity and ſimplicity of the language:—"And God ſaid, Let there be "light, and there was light [1]." The more words you would accumulate upon this thought, the more you would detract from the ſublimity of it: for the underſtanding quickly comprehends the Divine power from the effect, and perhaps moſt completely, when it is not attempted to be explained; the perception in that caſe is the more vivid, inaſmuch as it ſeems to proceed from the proper action and energy of the mind itſelf. The Prophets have alſo depicted the ſame conception in poetical language, and with no leſs force and magnificence of expreſſion. The whole creation is ſummoned forth to celebrate the praiſe of the Almighty:

[1] Gen. i. 3.

"Let

" Let them praiſe the name of JEHOVAH;
" For he commanded, and they were created[2]."

And in another place:

" For he ſpoke, and it was;
" He commanded, and it ſtood faſt[3]."

The ſame ſubject is frequently treated more diffuſely, many circumſtances being added, and a variety of imagery introduced for the purpoſe of illuſtration. Whether this be executed in a manner ſuitable to the greatneſs and dignity of the ſubject, may be eaſily determined by a few examples:

" Where waſt thou when I laid the foundations
" of the earth?
" If thou knoweſt, declare.
" Say, who fixed the proportions of it, for ſurely
" thou knoweſt;
" Or who ſtretched out the line upon it?
" Upon what were its foundations fixed?
" Or who laid the corner-ſtone thereof?
" When the morning ſtars ſung together,
" And all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy.
" When the ſea was ſhut up with doors,
" When it burſt forth as an infant that cometh
" out of the womb.

[2] PSAL. cxlviii. 5. [3] PSAL. xxxiii. 9.

" When

" When I placed the cloud for its robe,
" And thick darkneſs for its ſwadling-band.
" When I fixed my boundary againſt it,
" When I placed a bar and gates.
" When I ſaid, Thus far ſhalt thou come, and
" not advance,
" And here ſhall a ſtop be put to the pride of
" thy waves [4]."

" Who hath meaſured the waters in the hollow
" of his hand;
" And hath meted out the heavens by his ſpan;
" And hath comprehended the duſt of the earth
" in a tierce,
" And hath weighed in ſcales the mountains, and
" the hills in a balance?
" Lift up your eyes on high;
" And ſee who hath created theſe.
" He draweth forth their armies by number;
" He calleth them each by its name:
" Through the greatneſs of his ſtrength, and the
" mightineſs of his power,
" Not one of them faileth to appear [5]."

In theſe examples, the power and wiſdom of the Deity, as demonſtrated in the conſtitution and government of the natural world, you ſee have ſuggeſted a variety of circum-

[4] JOB xxxviii. 4—11. [5] ISAI. xl. 12 and 26.

ſtances,

ſtances, a ſplendid aſſemblage of imagery, of which it is a ſufficient commendation to ſay, the whole is not unworthy the greatneſs of the ſubject. The caſe is, however, materially different, when the attributes of God are conſidered in themſelves ſimply and abſtractedly, with no illuſtration or amplification from their operations and effects. Here the human mind is abſorbed, overwhelmed as it were in a boundleſs vortex; and ſtudies in vain for an expedient to extricate itſelf. But the greatneſs of the ſubject may be juſtly eſtimated by its difficulty; and while the imagination labours to comprehend what is beyond its powers, this very labour itſelf, and theſe ineffectual endeavours, ſufficiently demonſtrate the immenſity and ſublimity of the object. On this account the following paſſage is truly ſublime. Here the mind ſeems to exert its utmoſt faculties in vain to graſp an object, whoſe unparalleled magnitude mocks its feeble endeavours; and to this end it employs the grandeſt imagery that univerſal nature can ſuggeſt, and yet this imagery, however great, proves totally inadequate to the purpoſe:

" O JEHOVAH, thy mercy extendeth to the hea-
" vens;
" Thy truth unto the clouds:
" Thy juſtice is as the mountains of ſtrength;
" Thy judgment as the vaſt abyſs[6]!"

But nothing of this kind is nobler or more majeſtic, than when a deſcription is carried on by a kind of continued negation; when a number of great and ſublime ideas are collected, which, on a compariſon with the object, are found infinitely inferior and inadequate. Thus the boundaries are gradually extended on every ſide, and at length totally removed; the mind is inſenſibly led on towards infinity, and is ſtruck with inexpreſſible admiration, with a pleaſing awe, when it firſt finds itſelf expatiating in that immenſe expanſe. There are many ſuch examples in the ſacred poetry, one or two of which will probably enable you to recollect the reſt.

" Canſt thou explore the deep counſels of God,
" Canſt thou fathom the immenſity of the Al-
" mighty?
" It is higher than heaven, what canſt thou do?
" It is deeper than the abyſs, what canſt thou
" know?

[6] PSAL. xxxvi. 6, 7.

" The

" The meaſure thereof is longer than the earth,
" And broader than the expanſe of the ſea [7]."

" Whither ſhall I go from thy ſpirit?
" And whither ſhall I flee from thy preſence?
" If I aſcend the heavens, thou art there;
" If I make my bed in the abyſs, behold thou
" art there!
" If I take the wings of the morning,
" And dwell in the extreme parts of the ocean;
" There alſo thy hand ſhall lead me,
" And thy right hand ſhall hold me [8]."

Here

[7] Job xi. 7—9.

[8] Psal. cxxxix. 7—10. I am not perfectly ſatisfied with the commonly received interpretation of the 9th verſe; as expreſſive of the continual motion from Eaſt to Weſt, and the velocity of the motion compared with that of the ſun's rays. I look upon the two lines of this diſtich to be in contraſt or oppoſition to each other, and not that the latter is a conſequence of the former; and this I think is ſo apparent from the very conſtruction of the ſentences, that there cannot remain a doubt concerning it: Thus there is a double tranſition ſpoken of, towards the Eaſt, and again towards the Weſt; and the length of the flight, and not the velocity of the motion, is the object of amplification. Thus Theodoret upon this paſſage, " He calls the Eaſt *the Morning*, and the " Weſt, *the extreme parts of the Sea*: to height and " depth he oppoſes breadth and length, deſcribing and " evincing the infinity of the Divine Being."

Here we find the idea of Infinity perfectly expreſſed, though it be perhaps the moſt difficult of all ideas to impreſs upon the mind: for when ſimply and abſtractedly mentioned, without the aſſiſtance and illuſtration of any circumſtances whatever, it almoſt wholly evades the powers of the human underſtanding. The ſacred writers have, therefore, recourſe to deſcription, amplification, and imagery, by which they give ſub-

" The author of a very uſeful collection of Jewiſh " commentaries, the title of which is *Miclol Jophe*, ſays, " this phraſe, *If I take the wings of the Morning*, ſhould be " underſtood as a common Oriental phraſe for *departure* " or *flight towards the Eaſt*. Theſe are his words, *If I* " *take the wings of the Morning, and fly with them*; i. e. " *If I go to the extremity of the Eaſt*." H.

Author's Note.

I cannot after all give up the beautiful allegory of *taking the wings* (the ſpeed, the ſwiftneſs) *of the Morning*. It is ſo much more poetical, ſo much more agreeable to the character and genius of the Hebrew poetry, that I reluctantly differ from our Author, and retain the old interpretation. The paſſage is, on the whole, the moſt beautiful inſtance of the ſublime, without any mixture of the terrific, with no images but the placid and tender, that is any where to be found. But its greateſt excellence is, that it is no leſs philoſophical than poetical; no leſs uſeful for the great truth which it inculcates, than pleaſing for the manner in which that truth is conveyed. T.

ſtance

ſtance and ſolidity to what is in itſelf a ſubtile and unſubſtantial phantom; and render an ideal ſhadow the object of our ſenſes. They conduct us through all the dimenſions of ſpace, length, breadth, and height: theſe they do not deſcribe in general or indefinite terms; they apply to them an actual line and meaſure, and that the moſt extenſive which all nature can ſupply, or which the mind is indeed able to comprehend. When the intellect is carried beyond theſe limits, there is nothing ſubſtantial upon which it can reſt; it wanders through every part, and when it has compaſſed the boundaries of creation, it imperceptibly glides into the void of infinity: whoſe vaſt and formleſs extent, when diſplayed to the mind of man in the forcible manner ſo happily attained by the Hebrew writers, impreſſes it with the ſublimeſt and moſt awful ſenſations, and fills it with a mixture of admiration and terror.

That more vehement ſpecies of negation or affirmation, which aſſumes the confident form of interrogation, is admirably calculated to impreſs the mind with a very forcible idea of the Divine power. This alſo frequently occurs in the ſacred poetry:

" This is the decree which is determined in the
" whole earth;
" And this the hand, which is ſtretched out over
" all the nations:
" For JEHOVAH God of Hoſts hath decreed; and
" who ſhall diſannul it?
" And it is his hand, that is ſtretched out; and
" who ſhall turn it back[9]?

" Hath he ſaid, and will he not do it?
" Hath he ſpoken, and will he not eſtabliſh it[10]?"

Nor is that ironical kind of conceſſion, which is ſometimes put into the mouth of the Supreme Being, leſs energetic; the following paſſage of Job is an admirable inſtance:

" Deck thyſelf now with majeſty and with pride;
" And array thyſelf in glory and honour:
" Pour out on every ſide the furiouſneſs of thy
" wrath;
" With a glance humble every one that is proud:
" Look upon every proud thing, and ſubvert it;
" And trample down the wicked in their place:
" Overwhelm them alſo in duſt;
" Bind up their faces, and plunge them into
" darkneſs.

[9] ISAI. xiv. 26, 27. [10] NUMB. xxiii. 19.

" Then

" Then will even I confeſs unto thee,
" That thine own right hand may ſave thee [11]."

When the Divine Omnipotence is oppoſed to human infirmity, the one is proportionably magnified as the other is diminiſhed by the contraſt. The monſtrous abſurdity of a compariſon between things extremely unequal, the more forcibly ſerves to demonſtrate that inequality, and ſets them at an infinite diſtance from each other.

Since, however, the ſacred poets were under the neceſſity of ſpeaking of God in a manner adapted to human conceptions, and of attributing to him the actions, the paſſions, the faculties of man; how can they be ſuppoſed ever to have depicted the Divine Majeſty in terms at all becoming the greatneſs

[11] JOB xl. 10—14. Can any one, who has duly conſidered the hiſtory of Nimrod, the firſt revolter againſt God and founder of idolatry, and the ſignal overthrow of his ſtupendous tower, with the diſperſion that immediately enſued—after well weighing the characteriſtic topics of alluſion in the Hebrew poetry (as briefly pointed out in the ixth Lecture) and the original of this paſſage from the 6th verſe—entertain a doubt to what the figurative terms here uſed were meant to allude?—I ſhould think it ſcarcely poſſible. See *A Diſſertation on the Paſſages in St. Peter and St. Jude concerning the Angel that ſinned.* S. H.

of the ſubject? And are they not in this caſe more likely to diſgrace and degrade it? May not that cenſure be applied to them, which Longinus ſo deſervedly applies to Homer, that he turned his Gods into men, and even debaſed them beneath the ſtandard of humanity?—The caſe is, however, materially different: Homer, and the other heathen poets, relate facts of their deities, which, though impious and abſurd, when literally underſtood, are ſcarcely, or at all intelligible in an allegorical ſenſe, and can by no means be reduced to an interpretation ſtrictly figurative [12]. On the contrary, in the delineation of the Divine nature, the ſacred poets do indeed, in conformity to the weakneſs of the human underſtanding, employ terreſtrial imagery; but it is in ſuch a manner, that the attributes which are borrowed from human nature and human action, can never in a literal ſenſe be applied to the Divinity. The underſtanding is continually referred from the ſhadow to the reality; nor can it reſt ſatisfied with the bare literal application, but is naturally directed to inveſtigate that qua-

[12] See FABRIC. *Biblioth. Græc.* L. v. c. 26. Vol. viii. p. 526.

lity

lity in the Divine nature, which appears to be analogous to the image. This, if I am not miſtaken, will ſupply us with a reaſon not very obvious, of a very obſervable effect in the Hebrew writings, namely, why, among thoſe ſenſible images that are applied to the Deity, thoſe principally, which in a literal ſenſe would ſeem moſt remote from the object, and moſt unworthy of the Divine Majeſty, are nevertheleſs, when uſed metaphorically, or in the way of compariſon, by far the moſt ſublime. That imagery, for inſtance, which is taken from the parts and members of the human body, is found to be much nobler and more magnificent in its effect, than that which is taken from the paſſions of the mind; and that, which is taken from the animal creation, frequently exceeds in ſublimity that which the nature of man has ſuggeſted. For ſuch is our ignorance and blindneſs in contemplating the Divine nature, that we can by no means attain to a ſimple and pure idea of it: we neceſſarily mingle ſomething of the human with the divine: the groſſer animal properties, therefore, we eaſily diſtinguiſh and ſeparate, but it is with the utmoſt difficulty

that

that we can preſerve the rational, and even ſome of the properties of the ſenſitive, ſoul perfectly diſtinct. Hence it is, that in thoſe figurative expreſſions derived from the nobler and more excellent qualities of human nature, when applied to the Almighty, we frequently acquieſce, as if they were in ſtrict literal propriety to be attributed to him: on the contrary, our underſtanding immediately rejects the literal ſenſe of thoſe which ſeem quite inconſiſtent with the Divine Being, and derived from an ignoble ſource: and, while it purſues the analogy, it conſtantly riſes to a contemplation, which, though obſcure, is yet grand and magnificent. Let us obſerve, whether this obſervation will apply to the following paſſages, in which the Pſalmiſt aſcribes to God the reſentment commonly experienced by a human creature for an injury unexpectedly received: there appears in the image nothing to excite our admiration, nothing particularly ſublime:

"The Lord heard, and he was enraged;
"And Iſrael he utterly rejected [13]."

[13] Psal. lxxviii. 59.

But

But when, a little after, the ſame ſubject is depicted in figurative terms, derived from much groſſer objects, and applied in a ſtill more daring manner, nothing can be more ſublime:

" And the Lord awaked, as out of ſleep,
" Like a ſtrong man ſhouting becauſe of wine [14]."

On the ſame principle the ſublimity of thoſe paſſages is founded, in which the image is taken from the roaring of a lion, the clamour of ruſtic labourers, and the rage of wild beaſts:

" Jehovah from on high ſhall roar,
" And from his holy habitation ſhall he utter his
" voice;
" He ſhall roar aloud againſt his reſting-place,
" A ſhout like that of the vintagers ſhall he give
" Againſt all the inhabitants of the earth [15]."

" And I will be unto them as a lion;
" As a leopard in the way will I watch them:
" I will meet them as a bear bereaved of her
" whelps:
" And I will rend the caul of their heart:
" And there will I devour them as a lioneſs;
" A beaſt of the field ſhall tear them [16]."

[14] Psal. lxxviii. 65. [15] Jer. xxv. 30.
[16] Hos. xiii. 7, 8.

From

From ideas, which in themſelves appear coarſe, unſuitable, and totally unworthy of ſo great an object, the mind naturally recedes, and paſſes ſuddenly to the contemplation of the object itſelf, and of its inherent magnitude and importance.

LEC-

LECTURE XVII.

OF THE SUBLIME OF PASSION.

Sublimity of ſentiment as ariſing from the vehement affections of the mind—What is commonly called Enthuſiaſm is the natural effect of paſſion: the true Enthuſiaſm ariſes from the impulſe of the Divine Spirit, and is peculiar to the ſacred poets—The principal force of poetry is diſplayed in the expreſſion of paſſion: in exciting the paſſions poetry beſt atchieves its purpoſe, whether it be utility or pleaſure—How the paſſions are excited to the purpoſe of utility; how to that of pleaſure—The difference and connexion between the pathetic and the ſublime—That ſublimity, which in the ſacred poetry proceeds from the imitation of the paſſions of admiration, of joy, indignation, grief, and terror; illuſtrated by examples.

WE have agreed with Longinus, that a violent agitation of the mind, or impetuoſity of paſſion, conſtitutes another ſource of the ſublime: he calls it "the ve-"hemence and enthuſiaſm of paſſion." It will be proper, therefore, in the next place, to conſider the nature of this enthuſiaſm; the principles on which the power of exciting or of imitating the paſſions in poetry may be

be ſuppoſed to depend; and what affinity ſubſiſts between paſſion and ſublimity.

The language of poetry I have more than once deſcribed as the effect of mental emotion. Poetry itſelf is indebted for its origin, character, complexion, emphaſis, and application, to the effects which are produced upon the mind and body, upon the imagination, the ſenſes, the voice, and reſpiration by the agitation of paſſion. Every affection of the human ſoul, while it rages with violence, is a momentary phrenzy. When therefore a poet is able by the force of genius, or rather of imagination, to conceive any emotion of the mind ſo perfectly as to transfer to his own feelings the inſtinctive paſſion of another, and, agreeably to the nature of the ſubject, to expreſs it in all its vigour, ſuch a one, according to a common mode of ſpeaking, may be ſaid to poſſeſs the true poetic enthuſiaſm [1], or, as the ancients would have expreſſed it, "to be inſpired; full of the "God:" not however implying, that their ardour of mind was imparted by the Gods,

[1] Aristotle expreſſes it μανικὸν (inſane), Plato ἐκφρονα (out of their common ſenſes), ἔνθεον (inſpired by a God), ἐνθουσιαζοντα (enthuſiaſtic).

but

but that this extatic impulſe became the God of the moment [a].

This ſpecies of enthuſiaſm I ſhould diſtinguiſh by the term *natural*, were it not that I ſhould ſeem to connect things which are really different, and repugnant to each other: the true and genuine enthuſiaſm, that which alone is deſerving of the name, that I mean with which the ſublimer poetry of the Hebrews, and particularly the prophetic, is animated, is certainly widely different in its nature, and boaſts a much higher origin.

As poetry, however, derives its very exiſtence from the more vehement emotions of the mind, ſo its greateſt energy is diſplayed in the expreſſion of them; and by exciting the paſſions it more effectually attains its end.

Poetry is ſaid to conſiſt in imitation: whatever the human mind is able to conceive, it is the province of poetry to imitate; things, places, appearances natural and artificial, actions, paſſions, manners and cuſtoms: and ſince the human intellect is naturally delighted with every ſpecies of imitation, that ſpecies in particular, which exhibits its own

[a] Niſus ait, Dine hunc ardorem mentibus addunt,
Euryale? au ſua cuique deus fit dira cupido?
Æneid. ix. 184.

image,

image, which diſplays and depicts thoſe impulſes, inflexions, perturbations, and ſecret emotions, which it perceives and knows in itſelf, can ſcarcely fail to aſtoniſh and to delight above every other. The delicacy and difficulty of this kind of imitation are among its principal commendations; for to effect that which appears almoſt impoſſible naturally excites our admiration. The underſtanding ſlowly perceives the accuracy of the deſcription in all other ſubjects, and their agreement to their archetypes, as being obliged to compare them by the aid and through the uncertain medium, as it were, of the memory: but when a paſſion is expreſſed, the object is clear and diſtinct at once; the mind is immediately conſcious of itſelf and its own emotions; it feels and ſuffers in itſelf a ſenſation, either the ſame or ſimilar to that which is deſcribed. Hence that ſublimity, which ariſes from the vehement agitation of the paſſions, and the imitation of them, poſſeſſes a ſuperior influence over the human mind; whatever is exhibited to it from without, may well be ſuppoſed to move and agitate it leſs than what it internally

nally perceives, of the magnitude and force of which it is previouſly conſcious.

And as the imitation or delineation of the paſſions is the moſt perfect production of poetry, ſo by exciting them it moſt completely effects its purpoſe. The intent of poetry is to profit while it entertains us; and the agitation of the paſſions, by the force of imitation, is in the higheſt degree both uſeful and pleaſant.

This method of exciting the paſſions is in the firſt place uſeful, when properly and lawfully exerciſed; that is, when theſe paſſions are directed to their proper end, and rendered ſubſervient to the dictates of nature and truth; when an averſion to evil, and a love of goodneſs is excited; and if the poet deviate on any occaſion from this great end and aim, he is guilty of a moſt ſcandalous abuſe and perverſion of his art. For the paſſions and affections are the elements and principles of human action; they are all in themſelves good, uſeful, and virtuous; and, when fairly and naturally employed, not only lead to uſeful ends and purpoſes, but actually prompt and ſtimulate to virtue. It is the office of poetry to incite, to direct, to temper

the paſſions, and not to extinguiſh them. It profeſſes to exerciſe, to amend, to diſcipline the affections: it is this which is ſtrictly meant by Ariſtotle, when he ſpeaks of the *pruning of the paſſions*, though certain commentators have ſtrangely perverted his meaning [1].

But this operation on the paſſions is alſo more immediately uſeful, becauſe it is productive of pleaſure. Every emotion of the mind, (not excepting even thoſe which in themſelves are allied to pain) when excited through the agency of the imitative arts, is ever accompanied with an exquiſite ſenſation of pleaſure. This ariſes partly from the contemplation of the imitation itſelf; partly from the conſciouſneſs of our own felicity,

[1] I think nothing can well be more ridiculous than the eſtabliſhed method of rendering παθημάτων ΚΑΘΑΡΣΙΝ, *the cleanſing* or *purging of the paſſions*. Why ſhould a ſecondary, or adventitious ſenſe of a word be adopted, unleſs its primary ſignification be incompatible with the context?—In the common verſion of JOHN xv. 2. καθαιρει, a word from the ſame ſource with καθαρσις, is tranſlated, *he* PURGETH, where it evidently ſignifies *he* PRUNETH; ſo παθημάτων καθαρσιν, inſtead of *the* CLEANSING, *or* PURGING *of the paſſions*, ſhould rather be *the* CHECKING of *their exceſſive growth, or* PRUNING *their luxuriances*, that ſo they might produce their proper fruits. S. H.

when

when compared with the miſeries of others; but principally from the moral ſenſe [4]. Nature has endued man with a certain ſocial and generous ſpirit; and commands him not to confine his cares to himſelf alone, but to extend them to all his fellow-creatures; to look upon nothing which relates to mankind as foreign to himſelf. Thus, "to rejoice "with them that do rejoice, and to weep "with them that weep;" to love and to reſpect piety and benevolence; to cheriſh and retain an indignant hatred of cruelty and injuſtice; that is, to obey the dictates of nature; is right, is honeſt, is becoming, is pleaſant.

The ſublime and the pathetic are intrinſically very different; and yet have in ſome reſpects a kind of affinity or connexion [5]. The

[4] See Lord KAIMS's *Elements of Criticiſm*, Vol. I. ch. ii. Dr. PRIESTLEY's *Lectures on Oratory*, p. 137. and HARTLEY *on the Human Mind*, §. iv. prop. 49. T.

[5] As our Author is here treating of that ſpecies of the *ſublime*, which is connected with the *pathetic*, and in a manner depends upon it; it may not be amiſs to conſider a little the means of exciting this ſenſation, which have been employed by ſome of the beſt writers.

There are two principal modes of producing this mixed ſenſation. Firſt, when the ſtory or ſentiment is ſufficiently

The pathetic includes the paſſions which we feel, and thoſe which we excite. Some paſſions

ciently ſtriking of itſelf, by reducing all the circumſtances into as narrow a compaſs as poſſible, and cauſing them to flaſh at once upon the mind; of which Livy's deſcription of the death of Lucretia is a fine example: and this appears the moſt natural, and is the ſureſt mode of affecting the paſſions. The ſecond is, by drawing out the deſcription, heaping circumſtance on circumſtance, and working up the mind by degrees: this, however, is rarely accompliſhed with ſufficient taſte and caution. If I were called upon to ſpecify another hiſtorical example, I would refer the reader to the deſcription of Agrippina's return after the death of Germanicus, in Tacitus; or, I might add, the example quoted by our Author from the Song of Deborah and Baruk, Lect. xiii. The French dramatic writers generally fail by attempting this latter mode of affecting the paſſions; which is only proper, when there is not force enough in any ſingle part of a narration; or when a picture cannot be drawn in a few words ſufficiently explicit.

Several circumſtances, when judiciouſly introduced, contribute greatly to the pathetic, and conſequently to that branch of *ſublimity*, which is connected with it. 1ſt, When innocent and helpleſs perſons are involved in ruin. To introduce an *infant* on the ſtage in a tragedy, though a common trick, is yet ſeldom deſtitute of effect. I muſt however remark, that if there be many to participate in the misfortune, the ſociety in ſorrow ſeems to leſſen its weight. 2dly, Abſence from friends, or perſons otherwiſe very dear: the whole of that inimitable poem, Mr. Pope's Eloiſa, affords

ſions may be expreſſed without any thing of the ſublime; the ſublime alſo may exiſt, where

affords a ſtrong example of this, and particularly the following lines:

——" No, fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole;
" Riſe Alps between us! and whole oceans roll!
" Ah! come not, write not, think not once of me."
289.

3dly, Exile:

————" Methinks we wand'ring go
" Thro' dreary waſtes, and weep each other's woe,
" Where round ſome mould'ring tow'r pale ivy creeps,
" And low-brow'd rocks hang nodding o'er the deeps."
Ib. 241.

" The world was all before them, where to chuſe
" Their place of reſt, and Providence their guide:
" They hand in hand with wand'ring ſteps and ſlow,
" Thro' Eden took their ſolitary way."
Par. Loſt, xii. 646.

4thly, A ſudden abruption from a ſtate of enjoyment:

" Now warm in love, now with'ring in my bloom,
" Loſt in a convent's ſolitary gloom!
" There ſtern religion quench'd th' unwilling flame,
" There died thoſe beſt of paſſions, love and fame."
POPE's *Eloiſa*, 325.

Language cannot expreſs a nobler union of the pathetic and ſublime than is contained in the laſt line,

where no paſſion is directly expreſſed: there is however no ſublimity where no paſſion is excited. That ſenſation of ſublimity, which ariſes from the greatneſs of the thoughts and imagery, has admiration for its baſis, and that for the moſt part connected with joy, love, hatred, or fear; and this I think is evident

5thly, The recollection of paſt happineſs is a fine ſource of the pathetic; or happineſs that might have been attained, but for ſome intervening circumſtance that unexpectedly precludes it. On this are founded ſome of our beſt Tragedies. See the Orphan. Alſo the Fair Penitent, laſt Act.

6thly, Apparent reſignation:

" Oh grace ſerene! Oh virtue heav'nly fair!
" Divine oblivion of low-thoughted care! &c.
" Enter each mild, each amicable gueſt,
" Receive and wrap me in Eternal reſt!"
Eloiſa, 297. T.

A 7th head may alſo be added, Inattention to ſelf, and ſolicitude for others. Thus, Lear to Kent:

" Pr'ythee, go in thyſelf; ſeek thine own eaſe——
" Poor naked wretches, whereſoe'er you are,
" That bide the pelting of this pitileſs ſtorm,
" How ſhall your houſeleſs heads and unfed ſides,
" Your loop'd and window'd raggedneſs, defend you
" From ſeaſons ſuch as theſe?"——

dent from the inſtances which were ſo lately under our conſideration.

How much the ſacred poetry of the Hebrews excels in exciting the paſſions [6], and in directing them to their nobleſt end and aim; how it exerciſes them upon their proper objects; how it ſtrikes and fires the ad-

And the addreſs of our Saviour—"Daughters of Jeruſa-"lem weep not for me, but for yourſelves and your "children." S. H.

[6] The pathetic is ſo much the prevailing, or diſtinguiſhing quality of the Hebrew writings, that I do not heſitate to aſcribe much of that ſuperiority, which the moderns claim in this reſpect over the Greeks and Romans, to the free uſe which they have made of ſcriptural ſentiments and expreſſions. The reader will eaſily be able to ſatisfy himſelf on this ſubject by a curſory inſpection of Milton, Pope, and even ſome of our beſt Tragic writers. Mr. KNOX has very judiciouſly pointed out how greatly Sterne has been indebted to them. That an author, indeed, who has borrowed from others all the tolerable thoughts, which are thinly ſcattered through his writings, ſhould reſort to the readieſt, and moſt copious ſource of pathetic imagery, is not ſurprizing. It is only to be lamented, that he has not made the beſt uſe of his plagiariſms; that theſe noble ſentiments are ſo ſtrangely diſfigured by the inſipid frivolity of his ſtyle: a ſtyle which no claſſical ear can poſſibly endure, and which muſt be confeſſed to derive its principal embelliſhments from what are called the *typographical* figures. T.

miration by the contemplation of the Divine Majeſty; and, forcing the affections of love, hope, and joy, from unworthy and terreſtrial objects, elevates them to the purſuit of the ſupreme good: How it alſo ſtimulates thoſe of grief, hatred, and fear, which are uſually employed upon the trifling miſeries of this life to the abhorrence of the ſupreme evil, is a ſubject, which at preſent wants no illuſtration, and which, though not unconnected with ſublimity in a general view, would be improperly introduced in this place. For we are not at preſent treating of the general effects of ſublimity on the paſſions; but of that ſpecies of the ſublime which proceeds from vehement emotions of the mind, and from the imitation or repreſentation of paſſion.

Here indeed a ſpacious field preſents itſelf to our view: for by far the greater part of the ſacred poetry is little elſe than a continued imitation of the different paſſions. What in reality forms the ſubſtance and ſubject of moſt of theſe poems but the paſſion of admiration, excited by the conſideration of the Divine power and majeſty; the paſſion of joy, from the ſenſe of the Divine favour, and the proſperous iſſue of events; the paſſion of reſentment

reſentment and indignation againſt the contemners of God; of grief, from the conſciouſneſs of ſin; and terror, from the apprehenſion of the Divine judgment? Of all theſe, and if there be any emotions of the mind beyond theſe, exquiſite examples may be found in the Book of Job, in the Pſalms, in the Canticles, and in every part of the prophetic writings. On this account my principal difficulty will not be the ſelection of excellent and proper inſtances, but the explaining of thoſe which ſpontaneouſly occur without a conſiderable diminution of their intrinſic ſublimity.

Admiration, as it is ever the concomitant, ſo it is frequently the efficient cauſe of ſublimity. It produces great and magnificent conceptions and ſentiments, and expreſſes them in language bold and elevated, in ſentences conciſe, abrupt and energetic.

" JEHOVAH reigneth; let the people tremble:
" He ſitteth upon the Cherubim; let the earth
" be moved [7]."

" The voice of JEHOVAH is upon the waters:
" The God of Glory thunders:

[7] PSAL. xcix. 1.

" JEHOVAH

" Jehovah is upon the many waters.
" The voice of Jehovah is full of power;
" The voice of Jehovah is full of majeſty [8]."

" Who is like unto thee among the Gods, O
" Jehovah!
" Who is like unto thee, adorable in holineſs!
" Fearful in praiſes, who workeſt wonders!
" Thou extendeſt thy right hand; the earth
" ſwalloweth them [9]."

Joy is more elevated, and exults in a bolder ſtrain. It produces great ſentiments and conceptions, ſeizes upon the moſt ſplendid imagery, and adorns it with the moſt animated language; nor does it heſitate to riſk the moſt daring and unuſual figures. In the Song of Moſes, in the Thankſgiving of Deborah and Baruch, what ſublimity do we find, in ſentiment, in language, in the general turn of the expreſſion! But nothing can excel in this reſpect that noble exultation of univerſal nature in the Pſalm which has been ſo often commended, where the whole animated and inanimate creation unite in the praiſes of their Maker. Poetry here ſeems to aſſume the higheſt tone of triumph and

[8] Psal. xxix. 3, 4. [9] Exod. xv. 11, 12.

exultation,

exultation, and to revel, if I may ſo expreſs myſelf, in all the extravagance of joy:

Tell in high, harmonious ſtrains,
Tell the world, JEHOVAH reigns!
He, who fram'd this beauteous whole,
He, who fix'd each planet's place;
Who bade unnumber'd orbs to roll,
In deſtin'd courſe, through endleſs ſpace.
Let the glorious Heavens rejoice,
The Hills exult with grateful voice;
Let Ocean tell the echoing ſhore,
And the hoarſe waves with humble voice adore!
Let the verdant plains be glad!
The trees in blooming fragrance clad!
Smile with joy, ye deſert lands,
And ruſhing torrents, clap your hands!
Let the whole earth with triumph ring!
Let all that live with loud applauſe
JEHOVAH's matchleſs praiſes ſing——
He comes! He comes! Heaven's righteous King!
To judge the world by Truth's eternal laws [10].

Nothing, however, can be greater or more magnificent than the repreſentation of anger and indignation, particularly when the Divine wrath is diſplayed. Of this the whole of the prophetic Song of Moſes affords an incompa-

[10] PSAL. xcvi. 10—13. and xcviii. 7—9.

rable

rable ſpecimen. I have formerly produced from it ſome inſtances of a different kind; nor ought the following to be denied a place in theſe Lectures:

" For I will lift my hand unto the Heavens,
" And I will ſay, I live for ever;
" If I whet the brightneſs of my ſword,
" And my hand lay hold on judgment;
" I will return vengeance to my enemies,
" And I will recompenſe thoſe that hate me:
" I will drench my arrows in blood,
" And my ſword ſhall devour fleſh;
" With the blood of the ſlain and the captives,
" From the buſhy head of the enemy [11]."

Nor is Iſaiah leſs daring on a ſimilar ſubject:

" For the day of vengeance was in my heart,
" And the year of my redeemed was come.
" And I looked and there was no one to help;
" And I was aſtoniſhed, that there was no one
" to uphold:
" Therefore mine own arm wrought ſalvation
" for me,
" And mine indignation itſelf ſuſtained me.
" And I trod down the peoples in mine anger;
" And I cruſhed them in mine indignation;
" And I ſpilled their life-blood on the ground [12]."

[11] DEUT. xxxii. 40—42.

[12] ISAI. lxiii. 4—6. See a note on this paſſage, Lect. xxx.

The

The diſplay of the fury and threats of the enemy, by which Moſes finely exaggerates the horror of their unexpected ruin, is alſo wonderfully ſublime:

" The enemy ſaid, I will purſue, I will overtake;
" I will divide the ſpoil, my ſoul ſhall be ſa-
" tiated;
" I will draw my ſword, my hand ſhall deſtroy
them:
" Thou didſt blow with thy breath; they were
" covered with the ſea [13]."

Grief is generally abject and humble, leſs apt to aſſimilate with the ſublime; but when it becomes exceſſive, and predominates in the mind, it riſes to a bolder tone, and becomes heated to fury and madneſs. We have a fine example of this from the hand of Jeremiah, when he exaggerates the miſeries of Sion:

" He hath bent his bow as an enemy, he hath
" fixed his right hand as an adverſary;
" He hath poured out his anger like fire on the
" tents of the daughter of Sion [14]."

But nothing of this kind can equal the grief of Job, which is acute, vehement, fervid;

[13] Exod. xv. 9, 10. [14] Lam. ii. 4.

always

always in the deepeſt afflictions breathing an animated and lofty ſtrain;

——— for in the conſcious boſom flame
Virtue, and grief, and ſoul-depreſſing ſhame.

" His fury rendeth me, he teareth me to pieces;
" He gnaſheth on me with his teeth,
" Mine enemy ſharpeneth his eyes upon me.
" They run with open mouth upon me,
" They ſmite me reproachfully on the cheek,
" They are ready to burſt with fury againſt me.
" God hath delivered me over bound to the
" wicked;
" Yea, he hath tumbled me headlong in perdi-
" tion at the diſcretion of the impious.
" I was in tranquillity, and he rent me aſunder;
" Yea, he ſeized me by the neck, and daſhed
" me in pieces;
" He hath even ſet me up as a mark for him.
" His archers encompaſſed me round,
" He pierceth through my reins and ſpareth not;
" He poureth out my gall on the ground.
" He breaketh me up breach after breach;
" He ruſheth upon me like a mighty man [15].

In

[15] Job xvi. 9—14. " Ver. 10. *Jitmalaon*, according " to the Sept. ὁμαθυμαδὸν δὲ καθῆραμον: R. L. B. Ger-" shom, *They are gathered together:* and the Arabic verb " *Mala* denotes in vi. Conjugation, *They aſſiſted one ano-*" *ther*,

In the ſame author, with what magnificence and ſublimity are ſorrow and deſperation expreſſed!

Were but my woes in equal balance weighed,
Did the vaſt maſs of miſery preſs the ſcale
Againſt the ſands, that ſkirt the ocean round,
'Twould far outweigh them: therefore boils my grief!

" *ther, and were unanimous*, (as if a great multitude were " collected together,) and it is conſtrued with the pre- " poſition *gnale*, as in this paſſage. See alſo ISAI. xxxi. " 4. quoted in Lect. xix. where *Mala* is rendered *a mul-* " *titude*. This interpretation, however, though ſuffi- " ciently confirmed by the preceding inſtances, is, per- " haps, not ſufficiently forcible and vehement in this place. " Ver. 11. *Jarateni, he precipitated me*. This I take to " be the true ſenſe of this word, which ought to be enu- " merated among thoſe that occur but once: for the other " place in which it is commonly read, NUMB. xxii. 32. " is certainly corrupted, and ſhould be corrected from the " SAMAR. which has, *becauſe thy way is evil before me*; " with which the anſwer of Balaam perfectly agrees, ver. " 34. *If it be evil in thy ſight*. Nor is the conſtruction " clear in this phraſe *Jarat He-darachecha*, unleſs we " agree that the true reading is *Jaratah*, &c. Not to " dwell upon this, however, the interpretation of the word " *Jarateni* appears perfectly juſt, if we conſider that the " Arabic verb *Verat* uniformly means, *he precipitated himſelf* " *into an affair whence he could not extricate himſelf*." H. *Author's Note.*

The

The pointed arrows of th' offended God
Fix'd in my heart rack every tender nerve;
And the ſlow poiſon drinks my ſpirit up;
While hoſts of terrors cloſe beſiege my ſoul.
O might thy ſuppliant urge one poor requeſt!
Thy wrath, O God! ſhould looſe at once thy arm,
(Thy vengeful arm which blaſting lightnings wields)
Daſh into pieces this imbecile frame,
And cruſh thy ſuffering creature into nothing[16].

The whole poem of Job is no leſs excellent in the expreſſion and excitation of terror, as

[16] Job vi. 2, 3, 4, 8, 9. This paſſage is thus given by Mr. Scott with a little alteration:

" O for a balance pois'd with equal hand!
" Lay all my ſorrows there 'gainſt ocean's ſand:
" Light is the ſand whereon the billows roll
" When weigh'd with all the ſorrows of my ſoul.
" Ah! therefore, therefore does my boiling woe
" In ſuch a torrent of wild words o'erflow.
" Rankling I feel th' Almighty's venom'd dart,
" His arrows fire my veins and rend my heart:
" His terrors 'gainſt me throng in dire array,
" War urging war, his boundleſs wrath diſplay.
" O that relenting at my earneſt cry,
" God would extend his thund'ring arm on high;
" Ruthleſs at once his ſmould'ring trident throw,
" And forcing thro' his mark the vengeful blow
" At once deſtroy me."

the

the example juſt now quoted ſufficiently demonſtrates. To this commendation, however, the prophetic writings ſeem to have the faireſt claim; it being indeed their peculiar province to denounce the Divine judgments upon guilty nations. Almoſt the whole book of Ezekiel is occupied with this paſſion: Iſaiah is alſo excellent in this reſpect, although he be in general the harbinger of joy and ſalvation. The following terrific denunciation, is directed by him againſt the enemies of Jeruſalem:

" Howl ye, for the day of JEHOVAH is at hand:
" As a deſtruction from the Almighty ſhall it
" come.
" Therefore ſhall all hands be ſlackened;
" And the heart of every mortal ſhall melt; and
" they ſhall be terrified:
" Torments and pangs ſhall ſeize them;
" As a woman in travail, they ſhall be pained:
" They ſhall look upon one another with aſto-
" niſhment;
" Their countenances ſhall be like flames of fire.
" Behold the day of JEHOVAH cometh inexorable;
" Even indignation, and burning wrath:
" To make the land a deſolation;
" And her ſinners ſhall he deſtroy from out of
" her.

" Yea, the ſtars of Heaven, and the conſtellations
" thereof,
" Shall not ſend forth their light:
" The Sun is darkened at his going forth,
" And the Moon ſhall not cauſe her light to ſhine.
" And I will viſit the world for its evil [17],
" And the wicked for their iniquity:
" And I will put an end to the arrogance of the
" proud:
" And I will bring down the haughtineſs of the
" terrible.
" I will make a mortal more precious than fine
" gold;
" Yea, a man, than the rich ore of Ophir.
" Wherefore I will make the heavens tremble;
" And the earth ſhall be ſhaken out of her place:
" In the indignation of JEHOVAH God of Hoſts [18]."

Jeremiah is ſcarcely inferior, though perhaps his talents are better ſuited in common to the exciting of the ſofter affections. As an example, I need only refer to that remarkable viſion, in which the impending ſlaughter and deſtruction of Judea is exhibited with wonderful force and enthuſiaſm:

[17] *I will viſit*, &c.] That is, the Babyloniſh empire: as *all the world* for the Roman empire, or for Judea: LUKE ii. 1. ACTS xi. 23. *Biſhop* LOWTH's *Iſaiah*.

[18] ISAI. xiii. 6—13.

" My

" My bowels, my bowels are pained, the walls of
" my heart;
" My heart is troubled within me; I cannot be
" ſilent;
" Becauſe I have heard the ſound of the trumpet,
" My ſoul the alarm of war.
" Deſtruction is come upon the heels of deſtruc-
" tion;
" Surely the whole land is ſpoiled:
" On a ſudden have my tents been ſpoiled,
" My curtains in an inſtant.
" How long ſhall I ſee the ſtandard?
" Shall I hear the ſound of the trumpet?—
" I beheld the earth, and lo! diſorder and con-
ſuſion;
" The heavens alſo, and there was no light [19]."

It would be an infinite taſk to collect and ſpecify all the paſſages that might be found illuſtrative of this ſubject: and probably we ſhall have more than one opportunity of diſcourſing upon theſe and ſimilar topics, when we come to conſider the different ſpecies of the Hebrew poetry: upon which, after requeſting your candour and indulgence to ſo arduous an undertaking, it is my intention to enter at our next meeting.

[19] JER. iv. 19, &c.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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